~THE STRONGEST BRIDE ...RTH~

SUMOMO-MOMOMO

3

SHINOBU OHTAKA

The strongest bride on earth.
Sumomomo Momomo.3
Shinobu Ohtaka

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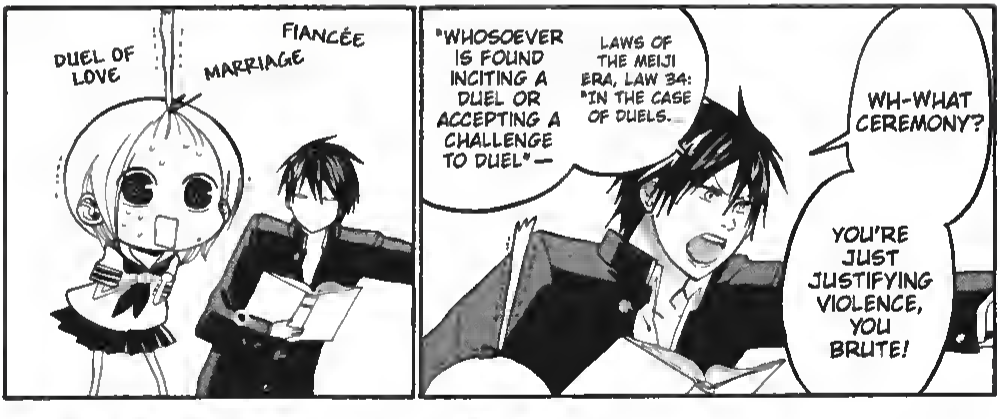
SUMOMOMO,MOMOMO

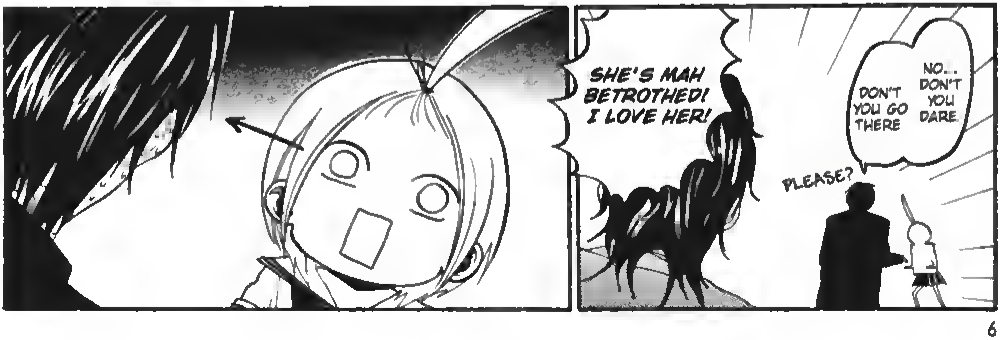
15. HEAVENLY WARRIOR HORSE MASK (3)

AN ASSASSIN ...
WHAT NOW...!?
I WILL DISPATCH THIS COWARDLY ASSASSIN...
LEAVE THE SITUATION TO ME.
!
THAT'S RIGHT. I'VE GOT HER TO RELY ON...
ZA (ZSH)

WEST
EAST
RAT
OX
TIGER
RABBIT
HORSE
SHEEP
MONKEY
ROOSTER
ENEMIES
DRAGON
SNAKE
DOG
BOAR
ALLIES
I AIN'T NO ASSASSIN, HERE.
I'M HIKARU NAKAJIMA, MASTER OF SANTERA-RYUU 'N' MEMBER OF THE EASTERN ARMY.
NO ENMITY! I'S JUST COME TO CHALLENGE INUZUKA-DONO...TO A "DUEL"!
WHY WOULD AN ALLY BEAR ENMITY AGAINST KOUSHI-DONO?
YOU'RE... AN ALLY?
L-
LOVE?
...OVER LOVE...
A DUEL ...

INU-ZUKA-DONO...
...AND MARRY MY FIANCÉE!
...I'M GONNA BEATCHA UP...
...IS A DISPLAY OF STRENGTH IN FRONT OF YER GAL.
IN MY CLAN, TH' TRADITIONAL COURTSHIP CEREMONY...


DUEL OF LOVE
FIANCÉE MARRIAGE
"WHOSOEVER IS FOUND INCITING A DUEL OR ACCEPTING A CHALLENGE TO DUEL"—
LAWS OF THE MEIJI ERA, LAW 34: "IN THE CASE OF DUELS...
WH-WHAT CEREMONY?
YOU'RE JUST JUSTIFYING VIOLENCE, YOU BRUTE!


SHE'S MAH BETROTHED! I LOVE HER!
DON'T YOU GO THERE
NO... DON'T YOU DARE
PLEASE?

I JUST WANT HER...TA LOVE ME.
TA ACCEPT ME.
TA MARRY ME!
THAT'S ALL I WANT!
THAT'S...
AHH...
...ALL I WANT...

STOP THAT, YOU!
PLEASE ACCEPT THIS DUEL, KOUSHI-DONO.
SFX: KOSO (SNEAK) KOSO
THIS IS A LOT MORE THAN JUST A "MOMENT OF MY TIME"!
EXCUSE ME?
...BUT PLEASE!
I REALIZE WE'RE TROUBLING YOU FOR A MOMENT OF YOUR TIME...
YOU KNOW THIS ISN'T AN ISSUE OF ME HAVING THE TIME FOR IT!
BUT PLEASE!
I REALIZE IT IS A NUISANCE!
OKAY?
I DON'T WANT TO DO IT...
.....?
.....?

...THAT HAD ACCOMPANIED HIS EVENTFUL RELATIONSHIP WITH MOMOKO.
...KOUSHI FINALLY REALIZED THE LONG-RUNNING SUSPICION...
AT THAT VERY MO-MENT ...
WHY... ARE YOU LOOKING AT ME LIKE THAT...?
?
...YOU'RE NOT STUPID. THOSE ARE EYES, NOT JUST HOLES IN YOUR HEAD.
UH... CALL ME CRAZY, BUT...
WH-WHAT DO YOU MEAN...?
?
...I'M ACTUALLY A WEAKLING, RIGHT?
YOU'VE REALIZED BY NOW...

WHY THE FALSE MODESTY?
SFX: GAKU (SHAKE) GAKU GAKU GAKU
!!!
NO!
SHE NEVER EVEN NOTICED!!
I'VE ROOT-ED—
ARRGH!
AS YOUR WIFE—
YOU IDIOT!
YOU'RE NOT MY WIFE! HOW HAVE YOU NOT NOTICED THAT!?
HOW !?

EN GARDE ...!!
NO...
NOOOO ...!!
ゴゴゴ
ゴゴゴゴゴ
GOGOGOGOGO (GRRRMMMM)
AND WHAT DID I DO ...?
I'VE SURVIVED TWICE BEFORE.
YES...IT'S ALREADY THE THIRD TIME!
SA (SHHP)
HUH? THIRD?
THIS IS MY THIRD TIME IN THIS SPOT.
WHAT NOW...?
DO YOUR BEST, KOUSHI-DONO! YOU CAN DO IT!
THAT NITWIT...

I USED MY BRAINS TO TALK MY WAY OUT OF IT!
"PUNISHMENTS FOR THE CRIME OF DUELING"!
YOU WILL FIND ...
...THAT THESE STRINGENT PUNISHMENTS APPLY NOT ONLY TO THE PARTIES OFFERING AND ACCEPTING THE CHALLENGE...
...BUT ALSO TO ANYONE CONNECTED WITH THE DUEL ITSELF! NO EXCEPTIONS!
IN OTHER WORDS ...
...BY THROWING THIS GAUNTLET, YOU ARE EFFECTIVELY ...
... TURNING YOUR BELOVED FIANCÉE INTO A CRIMINAL!!
.....
AND EVEN MORE IMPORTANTLY ...
...WHAT A HUSBAND AND WIFE TRULY NEED...
...IS A BOND OF HUMAN TRUST TO CONSUMMATE THEIR RELATIONSHIP.
IN OTHER WORDS, RESPECT AND LOVE...!

...IF YOUR BELOVED ONLY CARES FOR YOU BECAUSE OF THE AMOUNT OF WEIGHT YOU CAN LIFT...
AS A MAN...
...BY STRIKING AND BEATING ANOTHER PERSON LIKE ME...?
IS THAT SOMETHING YOU WOULD GAIN...
THIS SHOULD DO IT...
...WILL THAT TRULY MAKE YOU HAPPY?
IF THAT DOESN'T CONVINCE HIM, NOTHING WILL...!!
HUMMM...
.....
WEAK REACTION ...
HUH !?
?
YA KNOW WHUT? YA KNOW WHUT I THINK...?
INU-ZUKA-DONO...

I THINK ALL YER FANCY-PANTS TOKYO JAPANESE ...
...IS JEST A LIL' BIT OVER MY HEAD...

BUT DON'T WORRY! A MARTIAL ARTIST ...
スッ... SU... (SSK)

GYUUOOOO (FWOOSH)

HE CAN'T UNDER-STAND WHAT I'M SAYING!!
MENTAL IMAGE

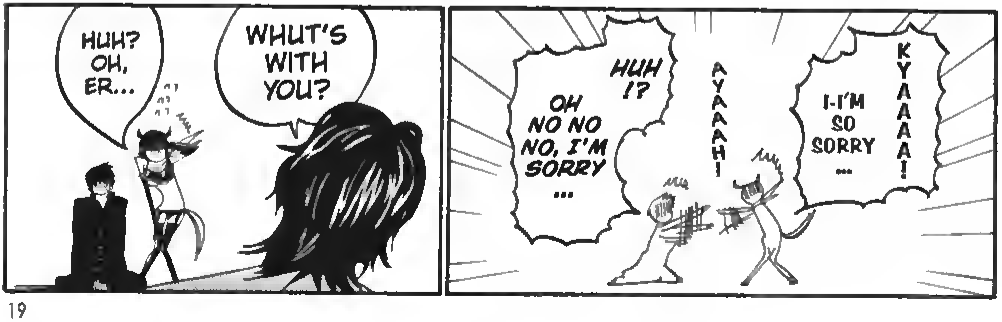
...SPEAKS THROUGH HIS MARTIAL ARTS...
BIKI (RRRK)
THIS IS TYRANNY ...!!
BIKI
BIKI
BIKIKIK!
SOME-ONE...
I WILL NOT INTERFERE! I PROMISE!
GREAT, THANKS...
YOU'RE ALL ABANDONING ME TO DIE...
WELL, SOMEONE... ANYONE...!!
IS HE TOUGH?
ONII-CHAN DODGED MY BLADE!
YES!

...SAVE ME...
...FROM THIS NIGHT-MARE!!
(GA (DOKK)
ガ!

CLASS REP...?
HUH...?
ARE YOU ALL RIGHT, INUZUKA-KUN...?
DEAD WRONG !!
WRONG!
クワッ
KUWA (GRAAD)
SFX: FUSA (FLAP)
...WHO LOVES HER TOWN AND LOVES PEACE AND GOODNESS!
...BUT A SIMPLE HERO...
I AM...
BIKU (FLINCH)
ビクッ

DON (BOOOM)
I AM HORSE MASK!!
AND I WILL ACCEPT THIS CHALLENGE IN YOUR STEAD!
WHO!?
BWAAAH

OH!


HUH? OH, ER...
WHUT'S WITH YOU?
OH NO NO NO, I'M SORRY ...
HUH!?
AYAAAH!
I-I'M SO SORRY ...
KYAAAAA!

"...TO A DUEL? TO MORTAL COMBAT?
"YOU DARE CHALLENGE THE NEXT COMMANDER OF YOUR OWN ARMY ...
I HAVE A MESSAGE FOR YOU...
...FROM SANAE-SAN.
...!!
"YOU SHOULD BE ASHAMED!" ...SHE SAYS.
IT WILL ELEVATE YOUR EMOTIONS AND BOOST YOUR NATURAL INSTINCT TO FIGHT!
THE HUMILIATION IS THE KEY!
THIS THING IS HUMILIATING!
WHAT?
TSK TSK TSK
...YOU CAN FINALLY CONQUER YOUR WEAKNESS! YES, YOU WILL BE ABLE...
BY CONTROLLING YOUR FEAR...
THAT SPECIALLY-CONSTRUCTED CORSET NOT ONLY INCREASES YOUR PHYSICAL STRENGTH, BUT ALSO YOUR STRENGTH OF WILL.
DON'T WORRY... NOTHING TO BE AFRAID OF...

SFX: ZAWA (MUHMUH) ZAWA
SH (SHH)
...TO FIGHT THE MEN WHO FRIGHTEN YOU SO!
THAT'S THE CHICK PEOPLE ARE TALKING ABOUT!
YEAH, THE HERO AROUND TOWN!
MY LITTLE BROTHER SAID ...
...THAT GIRL GOT HER PURSE BACK WHEN A THIEF SNATCHED IT.
AND MY MOM TOLD ME...
GIVE THAT BACK!
...SHE SAVED HIM FROM A GROUP OF BULLIES.
...I HAVE WORN THIS OUTFIT...
...TIME AND AGAIN.
IN ORDER TO ELICIT THE COURAGE TO FIGHT...

...AND IT'S STILL JUST AS MORTIFYING AS EVER!!
KAAA (BLUSHHHH)
CHIRA (PEEK)
BUT...
...I MUST WITH-STAND THE SHAME!
UNLIKE THE LAST TIME, WHEN I COULD ONLY STAND BY AND WATCH...
...I WILL PROTECT YOU TODAY.
GU (CLENCH)

...TO FIGHT?
!
ARE YOU PREPARED ...
SHE WILL ACCEPT THE RESULTS AS YOUR DISPLAY OF COURTSHIP.
THEREFORE, I HAVE COME AT SANAE-SAN'S REQUEST TO FIGHT IN HIS PLACE!
ZA (ZSHH)
YOU BET!
!!!
NOT TODAY!
I WON'T RUN AWAY...

CHAPTER 15, HEAVENLY WARRIOR HORSE MASK (3) – END

16. HEAVENLY WARRIOR HORSE MASK (4)

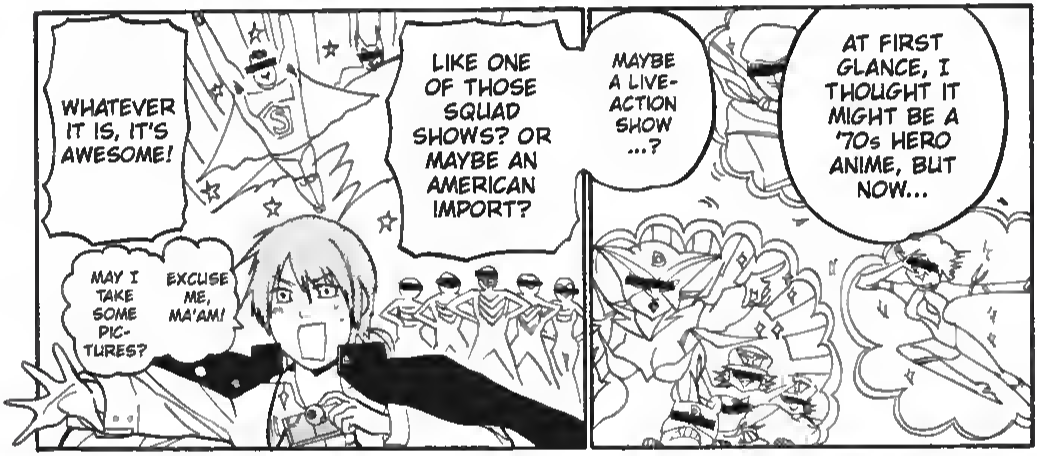
FIGHT!!
(DON (BOOM)
DO DO DO DO DO DO DO DO DO DO
I'M GUNNA WIN!
JEST YOU WATCH ME!
SANAE-SAN!
SANAAAE!
SAAAAN!!

I AM WATCHING ...
ON THE IN-SIDE
I KNOW I'M WEARING THIS STUPID THING...
...FOR THE COURAGE TO FIGHT...
じっ……
JI (STARE)
...BUT STILL, IT'S SO EMBAR-RASSING ...!!
ぎゅっ
GYU (CLENCH)
FIGHTING IS THE ONLY WAY I CAN PROTECT INUZUKA-KUN.

AS LONG AS I CAN FINISH WHILE I'M STILL IN THIS FORM...
SANAE, YOU REALIZE THAT THIS VERSION...
...ONLY PROVIDES 20% OF YOUR FULL POTENTIAL.

.....
WAIT A MINUTE...!!
OH!
SFX: ZAWA (MURMUR) ZAWA
WHO COULD THAT BE?
I'M SAVED.

THAT MUST BE COSPLAY...BUT FROM WHAT?


AT FIRST GLANCE, I THOUGHT IT MIGHT BE A '70s HERO ANIME, BUT NOW...
MAYBE A LIVE-ACTION SHOW ...?
LIKE ONE OF THOSE SQUAD SHOWS? OR MAYBE AN AMERICAN IMPORT?
WHATEVER IT IS, IT'S AWESOME!
EXCUSE ME, MA'AM!
MAY I TAKE SOME PICTURES?

PLEASE DON'T MIND HIM. PLEASE.
PASHA (CLICK)
PASHA
PASHA
PASHA
PASHA
SORRY ABOUT THIS...
DA (DASH)

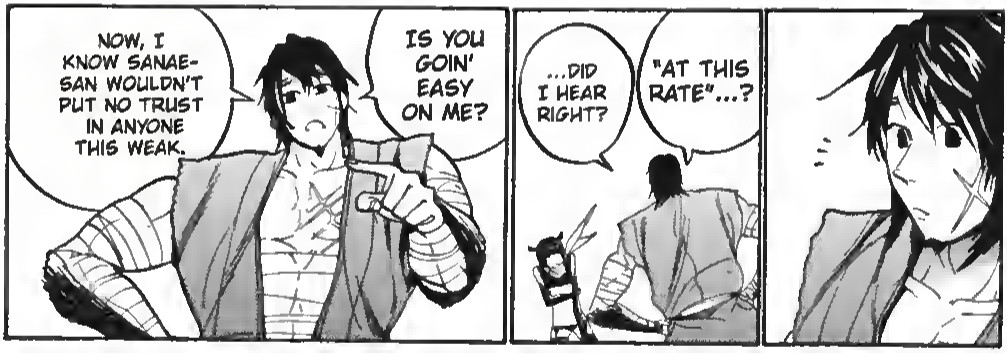
BUT I WANT...
!!
DO (BAM)
DO
DO
DO
DO
...TO WRAP THIS UP...
...NICE AND QUICK!!
ZUBAN (ZBAMM)

WHAT DO YA CALL THAT?
WAS THAT A KICK...?
A REAL KICK...
BLIN (ZWOOP)
THAT FLUFFY LITTLE TAP AIN'T NO KICK.
GA (GRAB)
!!!

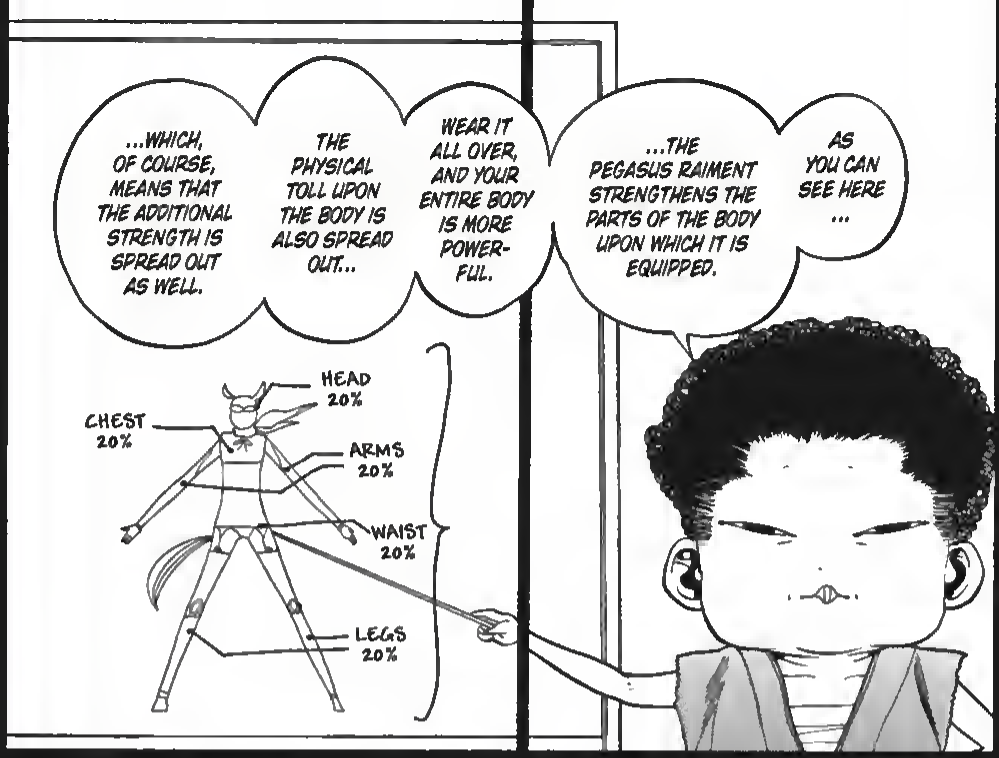
ZUDON (ZABOOOM)
.....
KUH!
I'M NOT DONE YET!
WHAT DO I DO?
...FEELS LIKE THAT.

SO...!!
!!
HE'S SO...
DDON (KABAM)

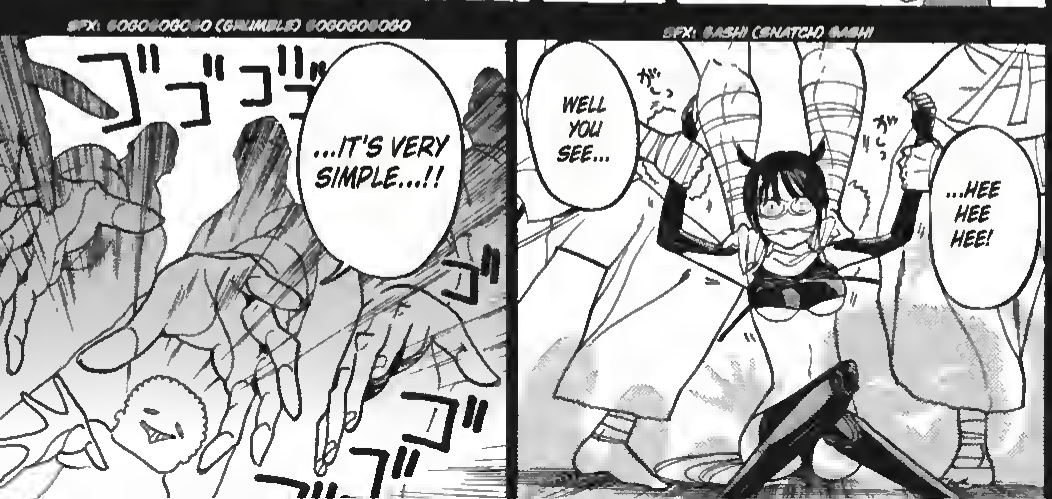
I GUESS HE REALLY IS THE STRONGEST MAN FROM THE BRANCH FAMILIES!
I CAN'T WIN...
NOT AT THIS RATE...
YER WEAK.
SO POWER-FUL...!


NOW, I KNOW SANAE-SAN WOULDN'T PUT NO TRUST IN ANYONE THIS WEAK.
IS YOU GOIN' EASY ON ME?
...DID I HEAR RIGHT?
"AT THIS RATE"...?

LISTEN TO ME, SANAE...
...YOUR FULL POWER!
SHOW ME...


...WHICH, OF COURSE, MEANS THAT THE ADDITIONAL STRENGTH IS SPREAD OUT AS WELL.
THE PHYSICAL TOLL UPON THE BODY IS ALSO SPREAD OUT...
WEAR IT ALL OVER, AND YOUR ENTIRE BODY IS MORE POWERFUL.
...THE PEGASUS RAIMENT STRENGTHENS THE PARTS OF THE BODY UPON WHICH IT IS EQUIPPED.
AS YOU CAN SEE HERE ...
HEAD 20%
CHEST 20%
ARMS 20%
WAIST 20%
LEGS 20%

.....
YOU REALLY WANT TO KNOW?
NIYA (SMIRK)
...TO MAKE IT 100%?
THEN WHAT CAN I DO...
...A KICK ONLY DOES 20% OF IT'S POTENTIAL DAMAGE.
IN THAT CONFIGURATION ...
LEGS 20%


SFX: GOGOGOGO (GRUMBLE) GOGOGOGO
ゴゴゴゴ
...IT'S VERY SIMPLE...!!
ゴ
ゴゴ
SFX: BASH! (SNATCH) BASH!
WELL YOU SEE...
...HEE HEE HEE!

GYAA
ビリ
IRI
ビリ
IRI
(RIP)
ビリ
IRI
YOU JUST TAKE IT OFF!
AAA
AAA
AA
AAA
H
ビリ
IRI
ビリ
IRI
ビリーーーッ
IRIIII
...THAT YOU DON'T NEED!
JUST TAKE OFF ALL THE PIECES...
THEY'RE ALL OGLING ME...!
.....
.....!!

I CAN'T TAKE THIS...
GAKU (SLUMP)
ガ
.....
...THEN MAYBE INUZUKA-DONO WILL.
WELL, IF YOU AIN'T GONNA FIGHT ME...
!
THEN SHOW ME THE GOODS.
NO!
NO, YOU CAN'T ...

.....
SHOW ME (YOUR BOD)!
SHOW ME (YOUR BOD)!

WA HA HA HA
HA
SHOW ME THE GOOOODS!
HA HA HA HA HA HA HA
*SANAE-VISION

INUZUKA-KUN...!!

...I CAN DO THIS... FOR YOU...
ALL RIGHT...
INUZUKA-KUN...
SFX: SU (SHH)
I'LL SHOW YOU...
CHII! (ZIIIP)
SH-SHOW ME...?
!!

SFX: PASHA (CLICK) PASHA PASHA PASHA

SFX: SHURU (SLOOP)

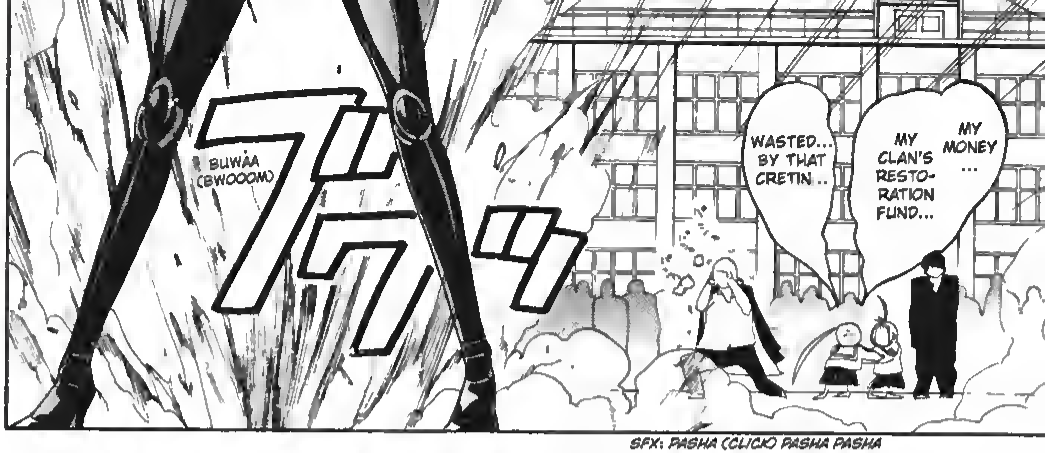
ばっ
BA (FWLIP)
...I THINK...
ぐい
GUI (SLIP)
...I CAN DO THIS...
I CAN BEAR IT...
...FOR INU-ZUKA-KUN'S SAKE ...!!

I WOULD DO ANYTHING FOR HIM!!
BAAN
(BOOOM)

SFX: PASHA (CLICK) PASHA PASHA PASHA

IS SHE CONDENSIN' ALLA HER STRENGTH INTO HER LEGS...!?
YES, I THINK I KNOW NOW...!
I-I DON'T BELIEVE IT...!
SHE'S ONE OF THOSE BEAUTIFUL LADY DEFENDERS OF LOVE AND JUSTICE...!

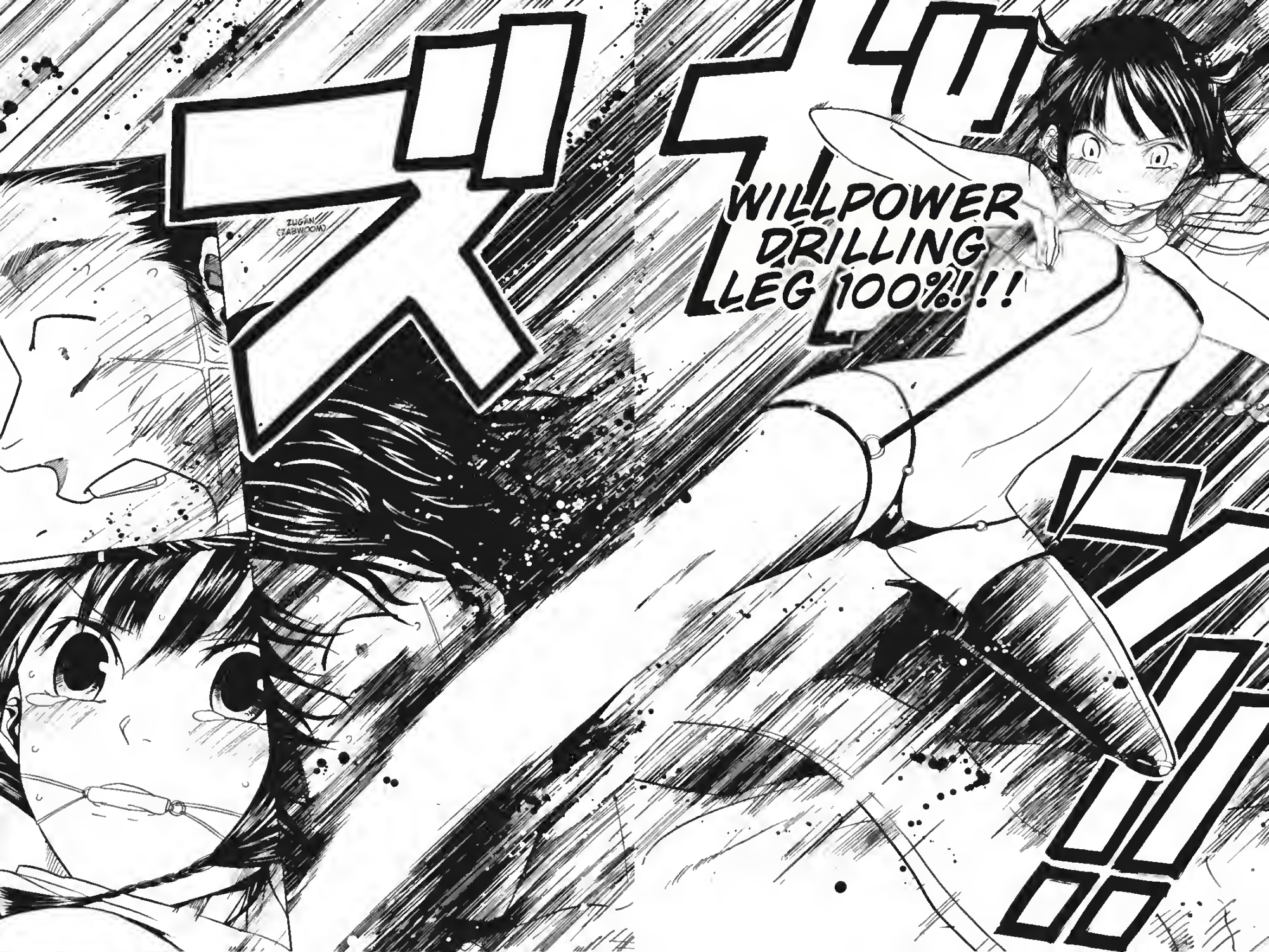
.....
...WAIT.
"CLICK"?
DON'T MIND HIM, PLEASE.
PASHA (CLICK)
PASHA
PASHA
PASHA
WHAT... IS THIS BRAND-NEW TOY YOU HAVE HERE?
BIKU (FLINCH)
HANZOU?
PASHA
REMEM-BER!?
...THE RENT MONEY?
...ABOUT USING UP...
REMEM-BER WHAT I TOLD YOU...
TEE-HEE♡
UH, A DIGITAL CAMERA?
REMEM-BER?



SFX: PASHA (CLICK) PASHA PASHA

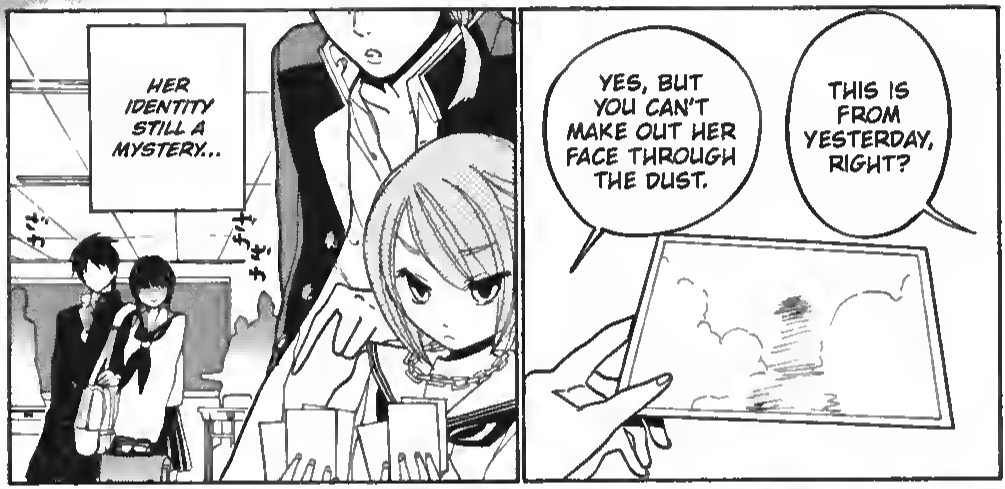
I'M GOING TO SAVE INUZUKA-KUN...
THE "SHINGO WILLPOWER PEGASUS RAIMENT" ...
I'VE HEARDA THIS BEFORE ...
THE LEGENDARY CONVERTIBLE CORSET...
CAN IT BE!?
HYUOOOOOOOO (WHOOOOOSH)

AND NOW...
...FULL POWER !!
BA (FWUP)
HUH !!?
SA...
...NAE—


ZUGÁN (ZABWOOM)
WILLPOWER DRILLING LEG 100%!!!

DOU (DMMM)
I PROTECTED YOU...
I DID IT...!
HAAAH
THANK GOOD-NESS...
HAAAH

...INUZUKA-KUN...



SFX: ZAWA (MURMUR) ZAWA ZAWA

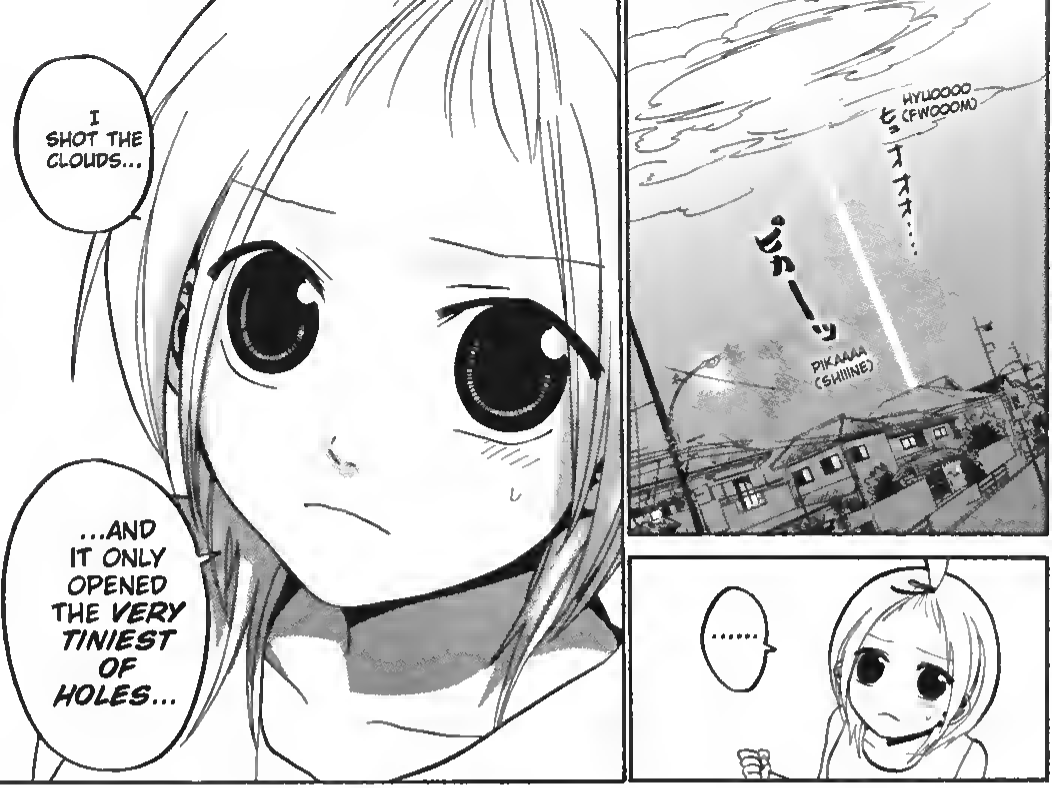
THEY'LL DIE DOWN IN TIME...
AND WHAT RE A FEW RUMORS?
I DON'T REGRET A THING.
IT WAS HUMILIATING, BUT I MANAGED TO PROTECT YOUR LIFE...
...THE HEROINE BECAME THE TALK OF THE SCHOOL...

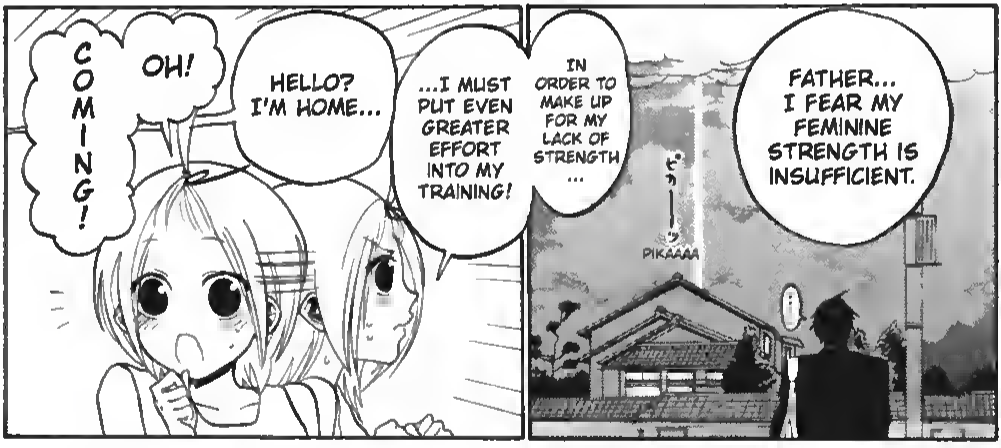
SFX: WAI (WHEE) WAI WAI
UH, CLASS REP?
...AND EVENTUALLY WAS CEMENTED INTO LEGEND.
OH, EASILY!
YOU'D BETTER MAKE BACK THE COST OF THE CAMERA.

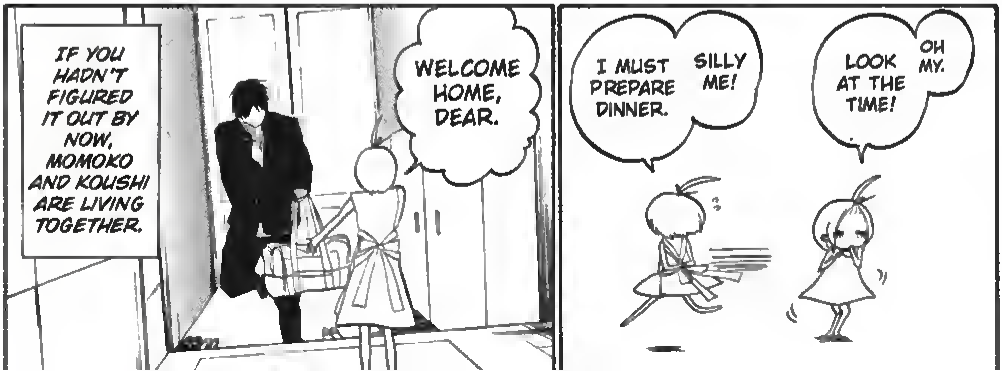
CHAPTER 16. HEAVENLY WARRIOR HORSE MASK (4) – END

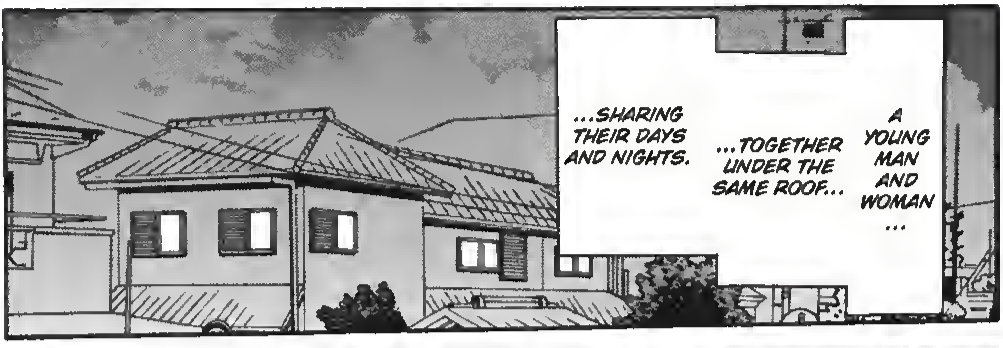
17. BREAKING THE STALEMATE

HAAAAA...
KOOOOO (FWOOO)
コオォォォー
HAIRA...
...ICHI-DEN MUSOU-RYUU...
...SECRET ART!!
KUWA (GRAAAH)
クワッ
RISING DRAGON SPLITTING HEAVEN SHOCK!!!
DODOU (DADOOOM)
ドドド

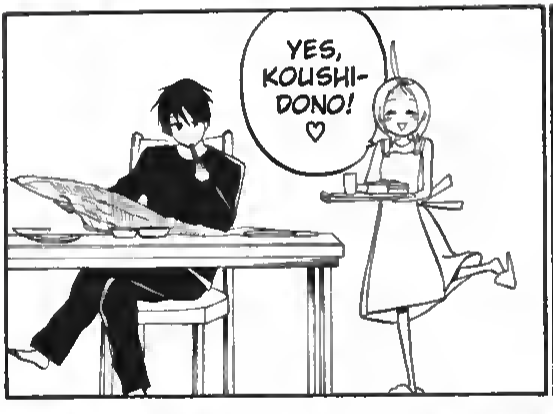

I SHOT THE CLOUDS...
...AND IT ONLY OPENED THE VERY TINIEST OF HOLES...
HYUOOOO (FWOOOM)
PIKAAAA (SHIIINE)
.....


COMING!
OH!
HELLO? I'M HOME...
...I MUST PUT EVEN GREATER EFFORT INTO MY TRAINING!
IN ORDER TO MAKE UP FOR MY LACK OF STRENGTH ...
PIKAAAA
FATHER... I FEAR MY FEMININE STRENGTH IS INSUFFICIENT.

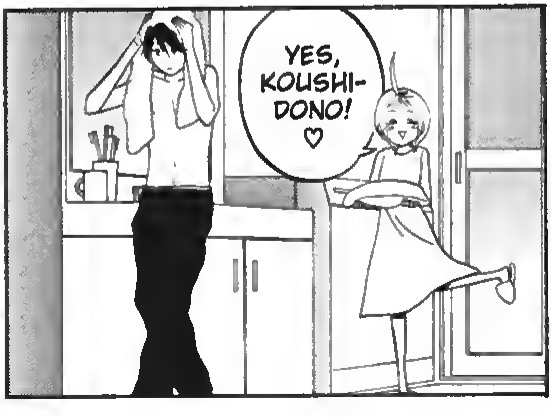

IF YOU HADN'T FIGURED IT OUT BY NOW, MOMOKO AND KOUSHI ARE LIVING TOGETHER.
WELCOME HOME, DEAR.
I MUST PREPARE DINNER.
SILLY ME!
LOOK AT THE TIME!
OH MY.


A YOUNG MAN AND WOMAN ...
...TOGETHER UNDER THE SAME ROOF...
...SHARING THEIR DAYS AND NIGHTS.

DARE WE GAZE UPON THE SORDID DETAILS OF THEIR PRIVATE LIFE TOGETHER!?


YES, KOUSHI-DONO! ♡

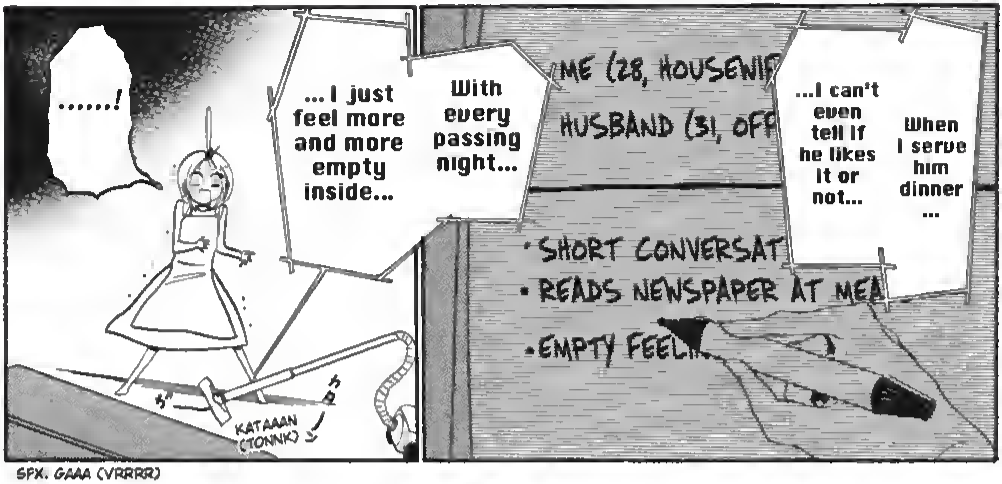
FOOD.


YES, KOUSHI-DONO! ♡

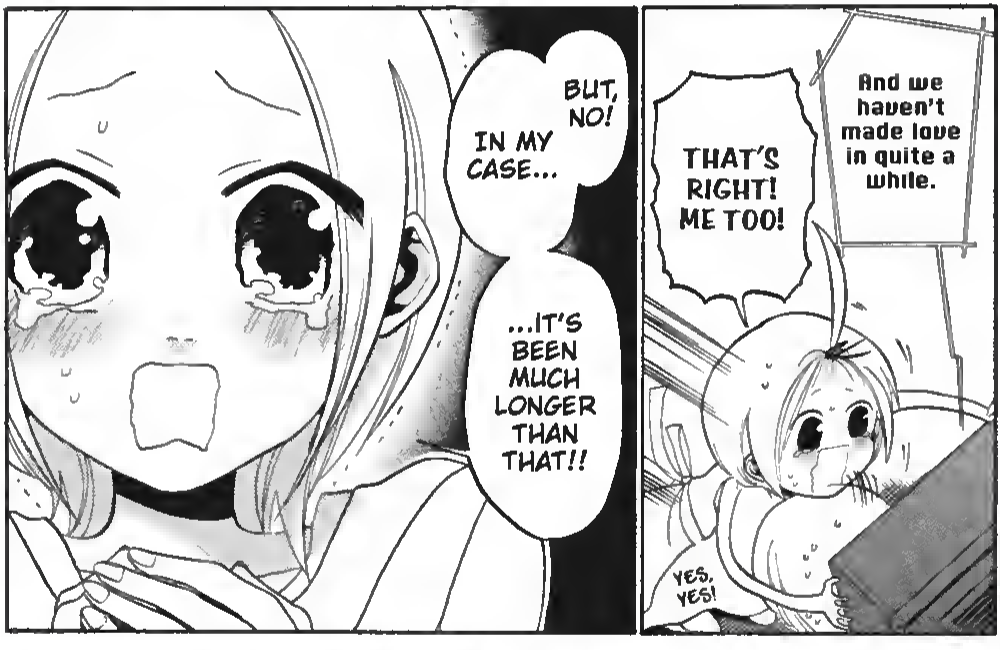
BATH.

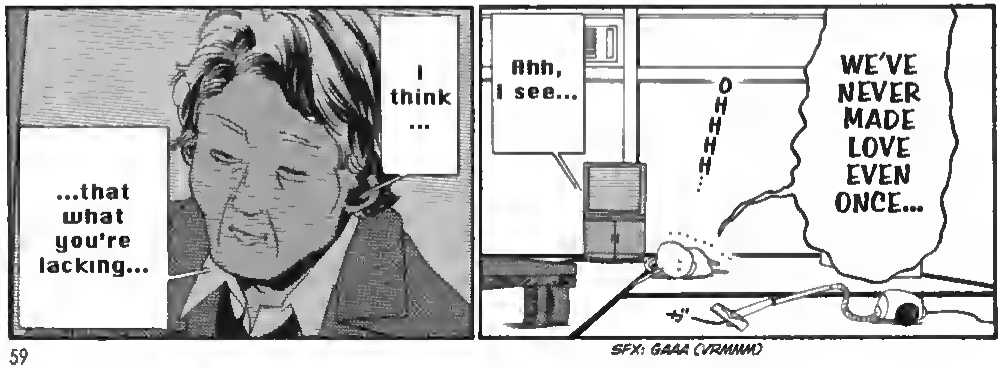
YES, KOUSHI-DO—
SLEEP.
WELL...
...GOOD NIGHT.

NATIONAL HOLIDAY
I FEEL SO EMPTY...
SOMETHING... SOMETHING IS LACKING, I FEEL!
Some-thing is lacking.
EXAGGERATION
...THE PROPER LIFESTYLE OF A HUSBAND AND WIFE WHO HAVE PLEDGED THE REST OF THEIR LIVES TO ONE ANOTHER?
CAN THIS TRULY BE...
KAAA (ZZZZ)
GAAAA (VMMM)
You're sick of your husband?
But ...
Oh no... I love him very much.
This is a call-in TV show for housewives.
LISTEN TO THIS!
ALL DAY PHONE CALL
Tell us about your day-to-day troubles.


.....!
...I just feel more and more empty inside...
With every passing night...
ME (28, HOUSEWIF
HUSBAND (31, OFF
...I can't even tell if he likes it or not...
When I serve him dinner ...
• SHORT CONVERSAT
• READS NEWSPAPER AT MEA
• EMPTY FEELI
KATAAAN (TONNK)

SFX: GAAA (VRRRR)



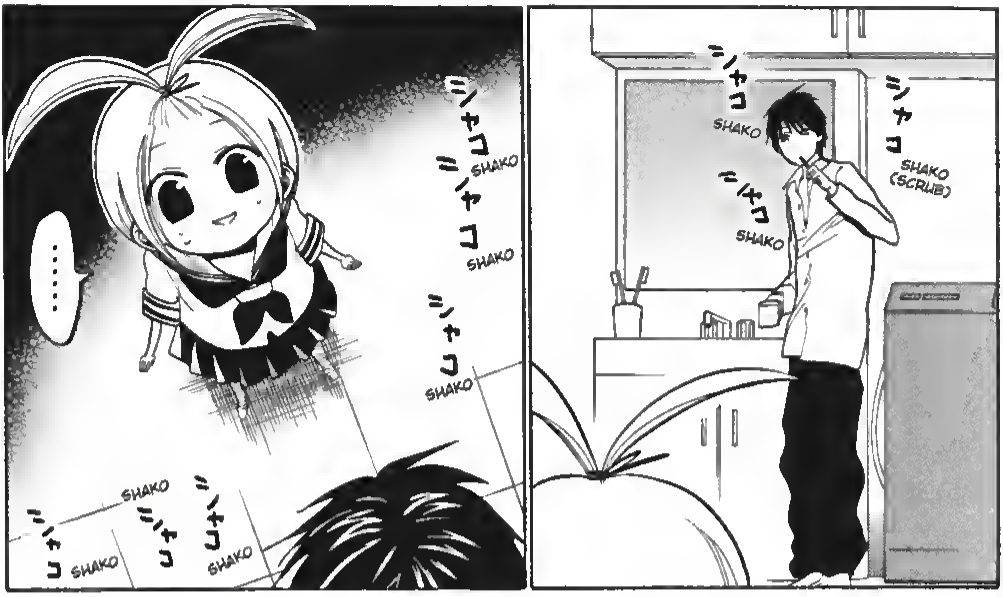


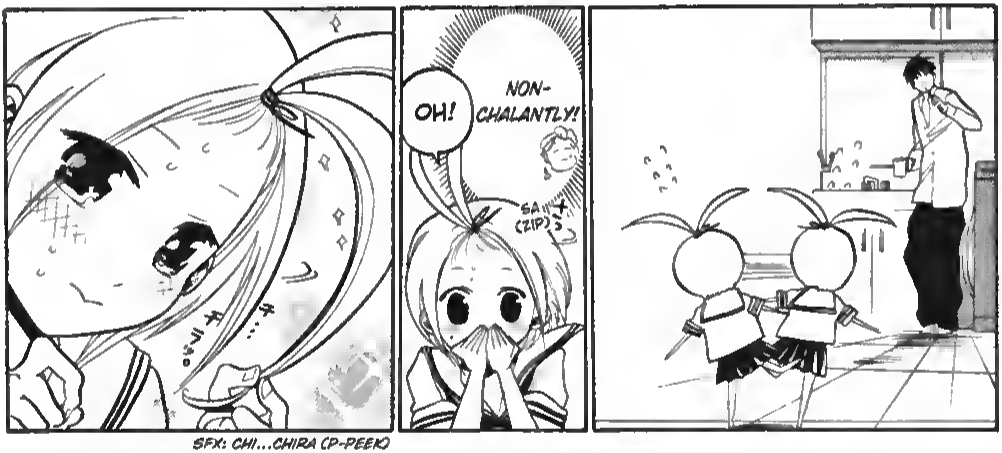
SFX: GAAA (VRHHM)

You want that feeling of a loving, newlywed relation-ship, don't you?
Isn't that right?
LOVE.
FORMAL SITTING POSITION
...is your hus-band's ...
... "love," ma'am.
...four tips.
...I have here...
In order to get what you desire...
KAAAA (ZZZZ)
TELL ME, MINO-SAN!
And how can she get that, Mino-san?
YES, I DO!

THAT'S IT!
.....!!
THE FOUR SECRETS TO GETTING YOUR HUSBAND TO PAY ATTENTION TO YOU!
SFX. SHAKO (SCRUB) SHAKO SHAKO SHAKO
NEXT MORN-ING
GOOD MORNING...
...KOUSHI-DONO.

NUMBER ONE: CHANGE YOUR HAIRSTYLE!
NYOKI
NYOKIIIN (BYOINK)
NONCHALANTLY CHANGE YOUR HAIR, AND YOUR HUSBAND WILL BE DELIGHTED.





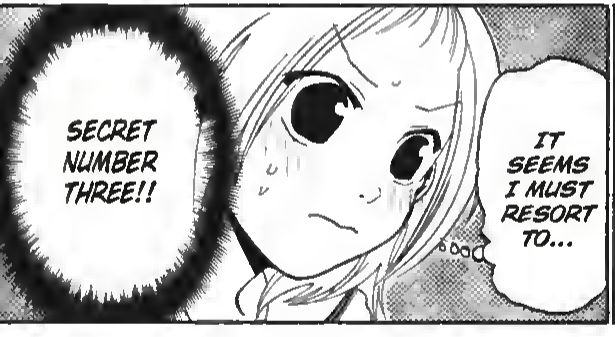
SFX: CHI...CHIRA (P-PEEK)

THERE ARE STILL THREE MORE SECRETS.
N-NO WORRIES ...
BACK TO NORMAL
H-HE REFUSES TO NOTICE!
LET'S GO.
KIIIIN KOOON (DING-DONG)
KAAAN KOOON (RING-DONG)
KOOON
KAAAN
PURU
PURU (SHIVER)
PURU
KIIIIN KOOON
NUMBER TWO...
IF BEING AGGRESSIVE DOESN'T WORK, TRY WITHDRAWING.

SFX: UZU (TWITCH) UZU UZU UZU UZU

HEE HEE HEE
AH HA HA
YES, I LIKE THOSE TOO!
"HEAVY-FREIGHT TRANSPORT"?
DANGER... SO HEAVY...
DANGER...
DANGER...
SO ARE THEY.
WE HAVE SO MUCH IN COMMON!
THIS IS GREAT!
?
Y-YES!
I KNEW YOU WOULD AGREE!
ISN'T THAT RIGHT?
THAT MAKES IT THE GREATEST TRAIN IN THE HISTORY OF JAPANESE LOCOMOTION!
I'LL NEVER FORGET ITS FINAL, MOVING RUN. THAT O-SERIES RAN FOR THIRTY-FIVE YEARS, SINCE THE VERY OPENING OF THE TOUKAIDOU LINE!
PERSONALLY, MY FAVORITE IS THE O-SERIES BULLET TRAIN...THE DREAM EXPRESS THAT WAS RETIRED FROM THE TOUKAIDOU LINE IN 1999!

?
TRAINS
HERE, HAVE THESE!
YOU CAN BORROW THEM.
TRAIN COLLECTION
HISTORY OF JAPANESE TRAINS
SPECIAL:
rewell, O-Series
DOSA (FLOMP)


SECRET NUMBER THREE!!
IT SEEMS I MUST RESORT TO...

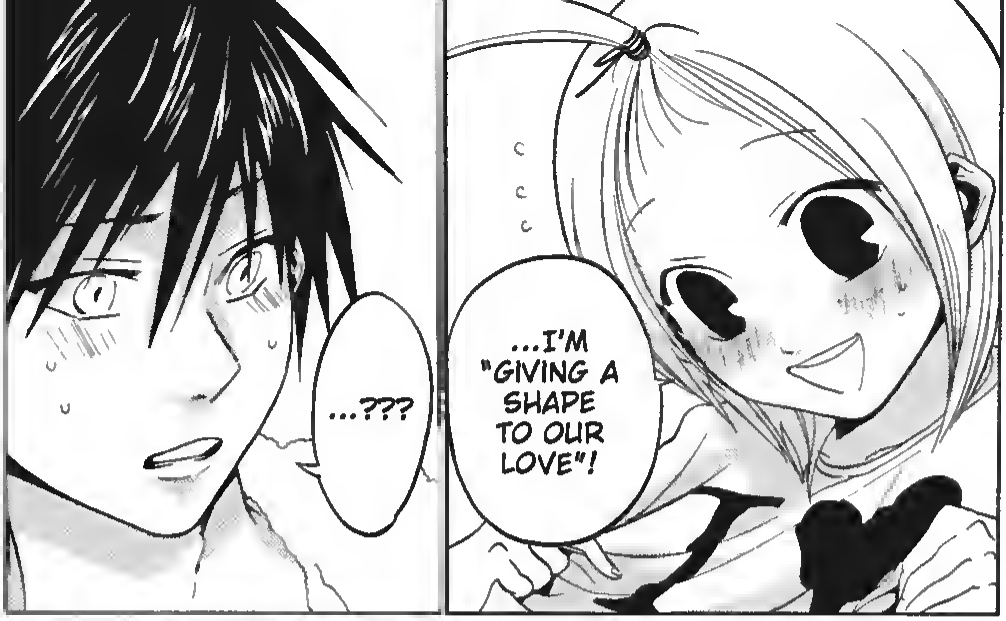
KOUSHI-DONO...

PIRA (FLAP)
...DID I? I CAN'T REMEMBER.
THAT'S WEIRD.
I DIDN'T BRING THIS SHIRT TO CHANGE INTO...

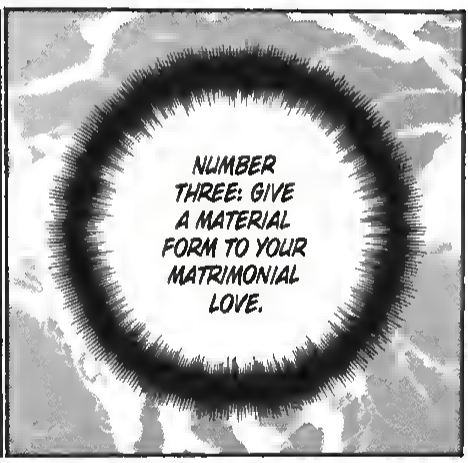
HUH?

I ♥ MOMOKO
GET OUT HERE!

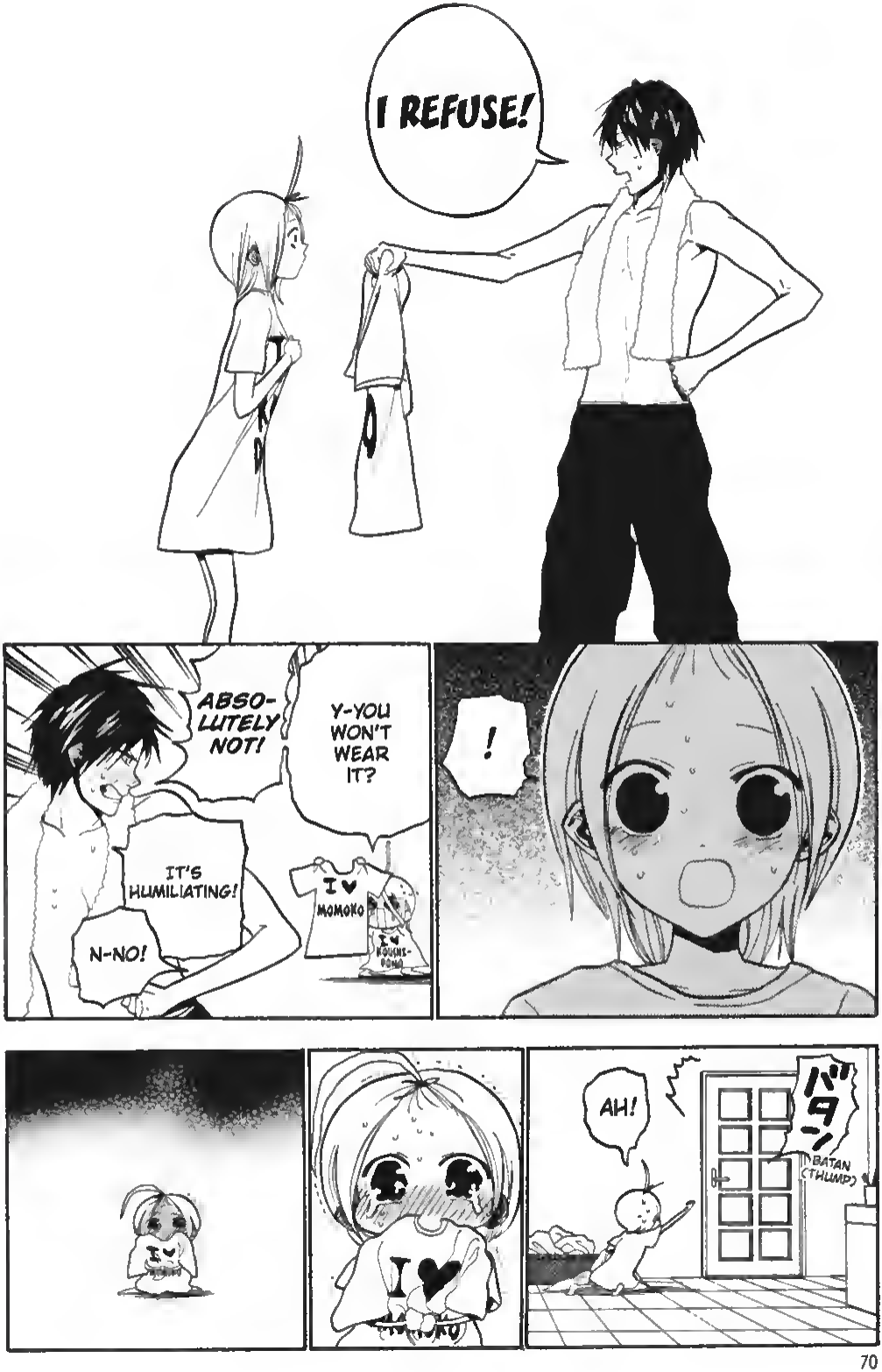
YEEEES?♡
WHAAAT?
I ♥ KOUSHI-DONO
EXCUSE ME...
...CAN YOU EXPLAIN?
PLEASE?
I ♥ MOMOKO
CERTAINLY! YOU SEE...

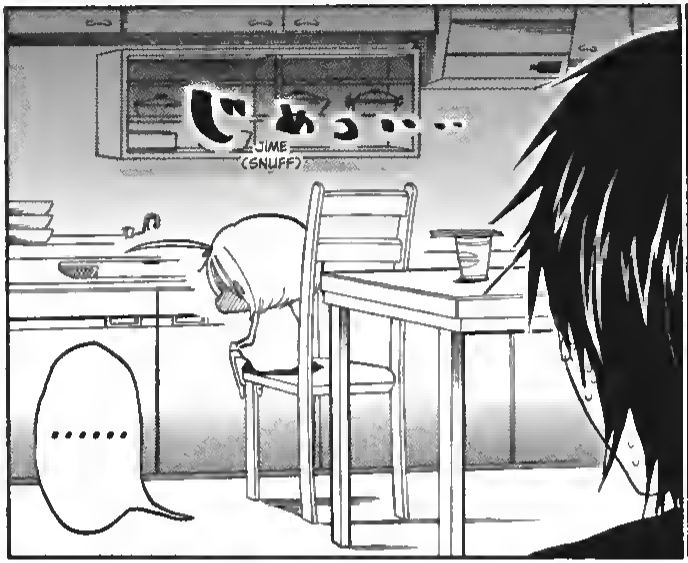

...???
...I'M "GIVING A SHAPE TO OUR LOVE"!

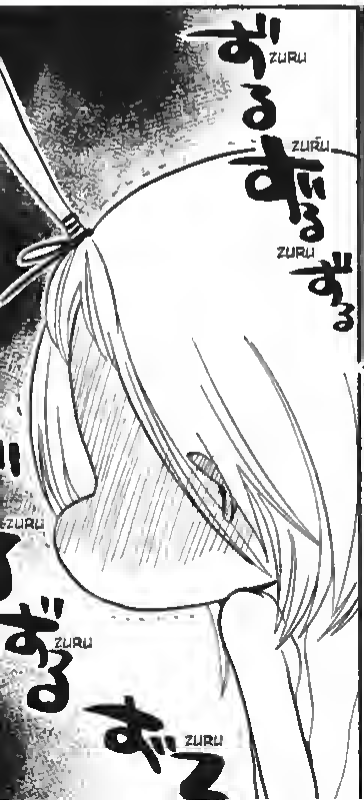
LOVE CAN GROW THIN AND LOSE ITS SUBSTANCE WITH TIME.
ドキ DOKI (BADUM)
ドキ DOKI
ドキ DOKI
I ♥ KOUSHI-DONO
IF YOU CAN ASSIGN IT A PHYSICAL SHAPE...


NUMBER THREE: GIVE A MATERIAL FORM TO YOUR MATRIMONIAL LOVE.

.....
ドキ DOKI
ドキ DOKI
ドキ DOKI
AND DO YOU FEEL THE SAME IN RETURN ...?
...KOUSHI-DONO!
I YEARN FOR YOU...
...THEN YOU MAY BE ABLE TO REAF-FIRM IT BETWEEN YOUR-SELVES.
GYU (=SQUEEZE)
ぎゅっ...!
ドキ DOKI
ドキ DOKI
ドキドキ DOKI

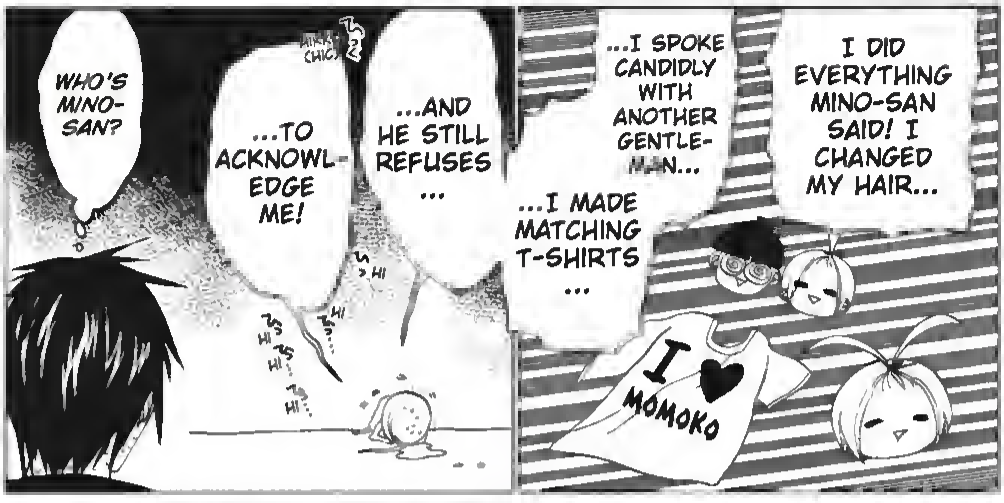

I REFUSE!
ABSO-LUTELY NOT!
Y-YOU WON'T WEAR IT?
IT'S HUMILIATING!
N-NO!
I ♥ MOMOKO
I ♥ KOUSHI-KUNG
!
AH!
バタン!
BATAN (THUMP)



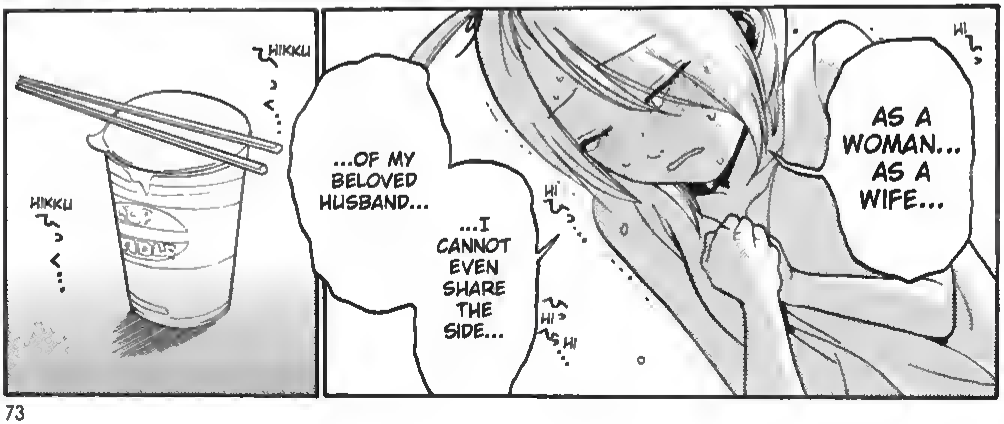


SFX: ZURU (SLURP) ZURU

WAAAA-
AHHHH!
AAAAH
AAH
BIKU (JUMP)
ビクッ
I AM NOTHING TO KOUSHI-DONOOOO!
WAAAAH! HYAAAA! BOOOO HOO HOO!
HE DOESN'T NEED ME...
WAAA!
.....
HUH??
AAAAH!
WAAAH!

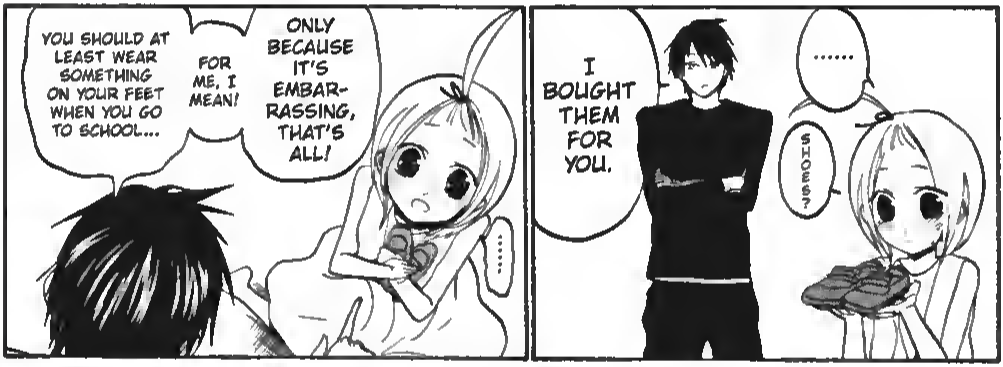

WHO'S MINO-SAN?
...TO ACKNOWL-EDGE ME!
...AND HE STILL REFUSES ...
...I MADE MATCHING T-SHIRTS ...
...I SPOKE CANDIDLY WITH ANOTHER GENTLE-M-N...
I DID EVERYTHING MINO-SAN SAID! I CHANGED MY HAIR...
I ♥ MOMOKO

...THAN MY OWN HOMEMADE COOKING...
...HE WOULD RATHER HAVE INSTANT RAMEN...
A-AND WORST OF ALL...

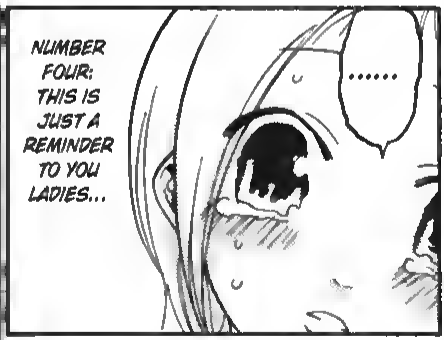

HIKKU
HIKKU
...OF MY BELOVED HUSBAND...
...I CANNOT EVEN SHARE THE SIDE...
AS A WOMAN... AS A WIFE...

I AM SO LOOOONE-LYYYYY...
Pffffffff (PFWEEEEEE)
WHAT'S GOING ON, HERE?
WAAAAAAAAAAAAH!
WAAAAAAAAAAAAH!
UHH...
WAAAAH!
WAAAAH!
.....
.....
WAAAAAAAAAAAAH!
WAAAAAAAAAAAAH!
UMM ...
HMM ...
I'VE GOT TO CALM HER DOWN...
AAAAH!
AAAAH!
AAAAH!
WAH! WAH!
STOP CRYING!!
COME ON...
DID I?
I DIDN'T SAY I LIKED THE INSTANT NOODLES BETTER.
WAAAAH!
WAAAAH!
WAAAAH!
WAAAAAAAAAAAAH!
WAAAAH!
OH!

HERE.

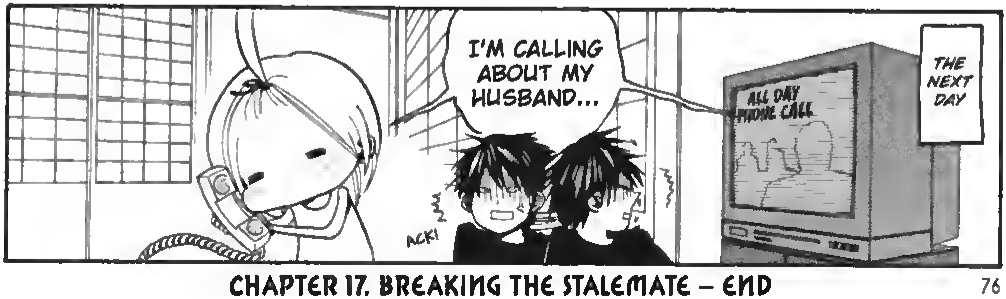

YOU SHOULD AT LEAST WEAR SOMETHING ON YOUR FEET WHEN YOU GO TO SCHOOL...
FOR ME, I MEAN!
ONLY BECAUSE IT'S EMBARRASSING, THAT'S ALL!
.....
I BOUGHT THEM FOR YOU.
.....
SHOES?

...BUT ALWAYS REMEMBER...
YOUR HUSBAND MAY NOT ADMIT IT...
?


NUMBER FOUR: THIS IS JUST A REMINDER TO YOU LADIES...
.....

MEN ARE SHY. YOU HAVE TO UNDERSTAND THIS.

...HE SURELY LOVES YOU VERY MUCH.
JIHUN (TOUCHED)
U...U...U...U
.....!!
WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT!!?
WAAAAH!
AND I LOVE YOU TOOOO!


I'M CALLING ABOUT MY HUSBAND...
ACK!
ALL DAY PHONE CALL
THE NEXT DAY

はっくしょい
HAKKUSHOI (BWAACHOO)
IN HANZOU'S CASE:
I THINK I'VE CAUGHT A COLD...
GUSU (SNIFF)
GUSU
OH, HONESTLY ...
IT WOULDN'T HAPPEN IF YOU COVERED YOURSELF UP AT NIGHT.
JUST DON'T SPREAD IT TO ME.
IN KOUSHI'S CASE:
IT WOULD SEEM...
...THAT KOUSHI-DONO HAS TAKEN ILL...

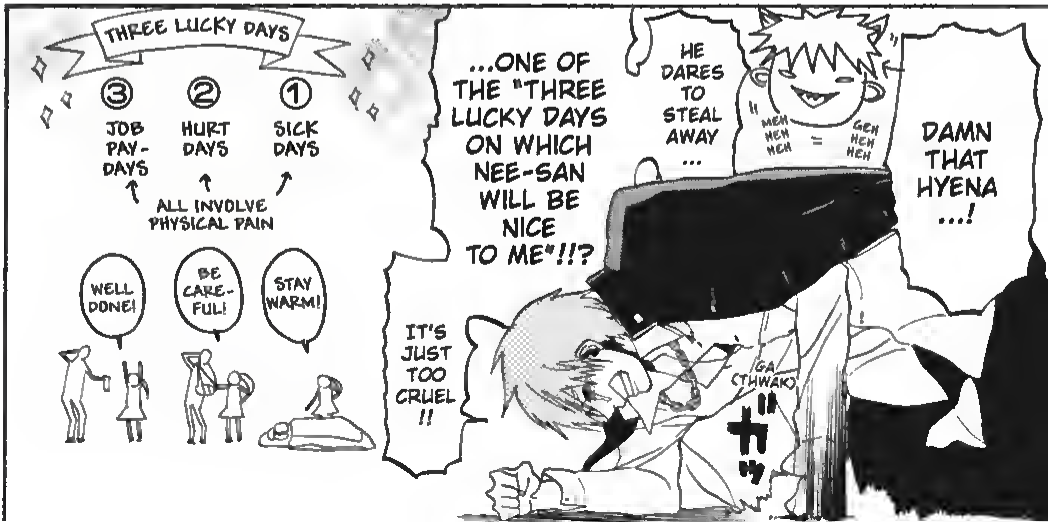
18. IROHA MIYAMOTO'S
ROUGH TREATMENT

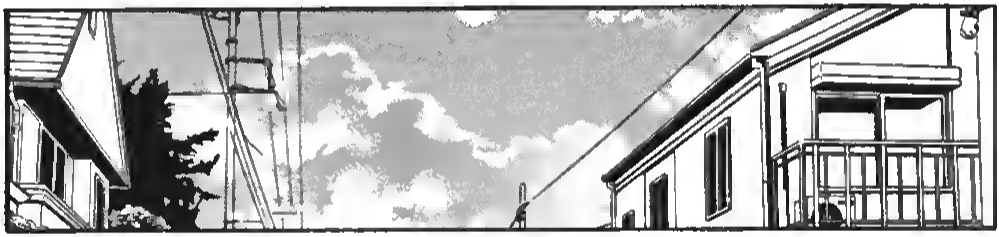
WHAAAAT!!?
GAAAAAN (DONNNNG)
HE IS AT HOME IN BED.
I CANNOT WAIT TO RETURN AND SEE TO HIS CONDITION ...
...UM, EXCUSE ME?
WHY THE SPECIAL TREATMENT?

SFX: PURU (TREMBLE) PURU PURU PURU

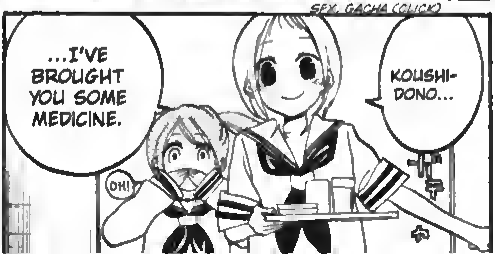
OH NO! MY FEVER... GETTING WORSE...
I'LL PEEL AN APPLE, IF IT HELPS!
I'LL DO ANY-THING ...
HACK-ING COUGH! KOFF GHOFF GER-HOFF !!
KETCHUP
WHAT!?
I-I WANT TO HELP!

NEEEE-SAAAN!
WON'T YOU SEE TO MY CONDITION!?


THREE LUCKY DAYS
③ JOB PAY-DAYS
② HURT DAYS
① SICK DAYS
ALL INVOLVE PHYSICAL PAIN
WELL DONE!
BE CARE-FUL!
STAY WARM!
...ONE OF THE "THREE LUCKY DAYS ON WHICH NEE-SAN WILL BE NICE TO ME"!!?
IT'S JUST TOO CRUEL !!
HE DARES TO STEAL AWAY ...
MEH MEH MEH = GEH HEH HEH
DAMN THAT HYENA ...!
GA (THWACK)



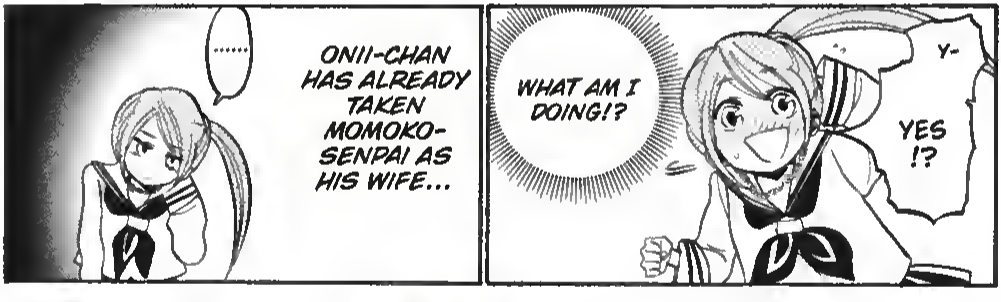
SFX: GACHA (CLICK)

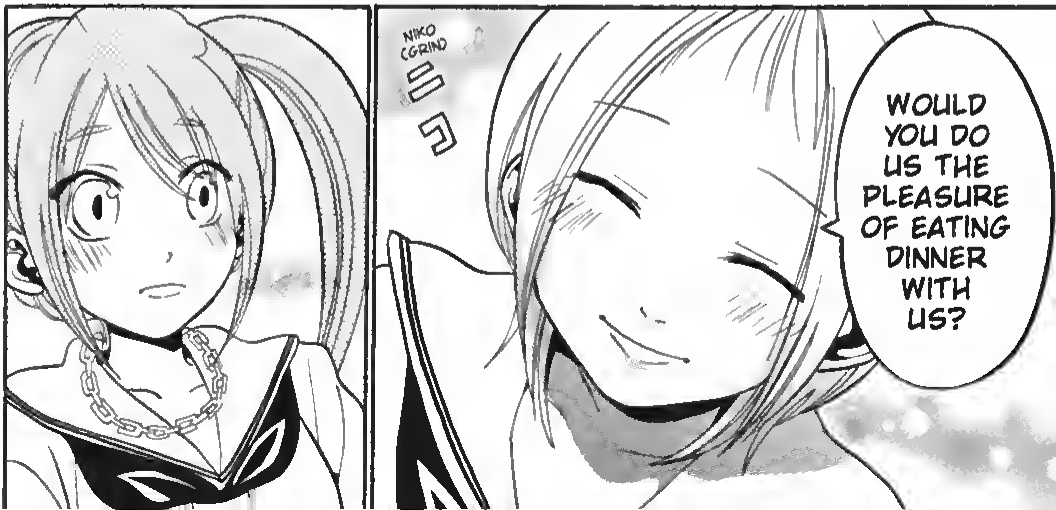


.....
PATAN (THUMP)
SHH!
I'LL GO AND MAKE DINNER...
LEAVE HIM TO ME!
...ONII-CHAN.
PLEASE GET BETTER SOON...
NO, ONII-CHAN!
YOU HAVE TO STAY WARM!
PASA (FLAP)
BASA (FLOP)
OH!
YOU NEED TO GET BETTER!
BASA
NO!

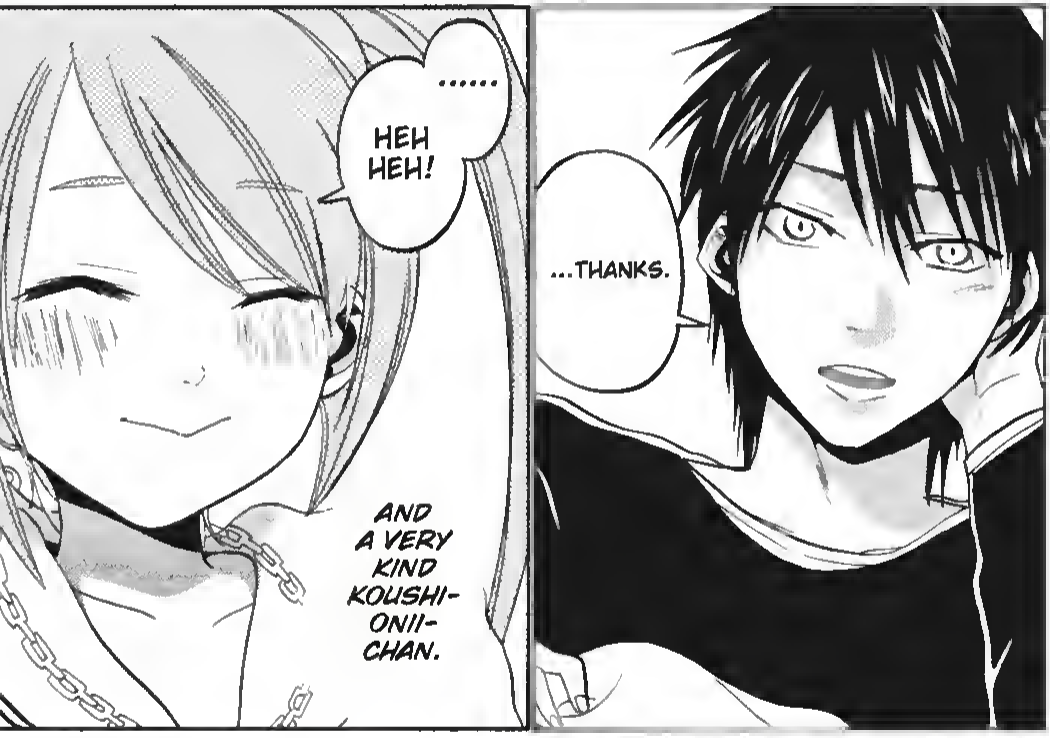
ドキッ
DOKI (BADUM)
ORO (PANIC)
ORO
ORO
ORO
ORO
ORO
ORO
JIIII (STARE)
CHI...
CHIRA (P-PEEK)
ドキ DOKI
ドキ DOKI
JIIII
ドキ DOKI
ドキ DOKI
ドキ DOKI
ドキ DOKI

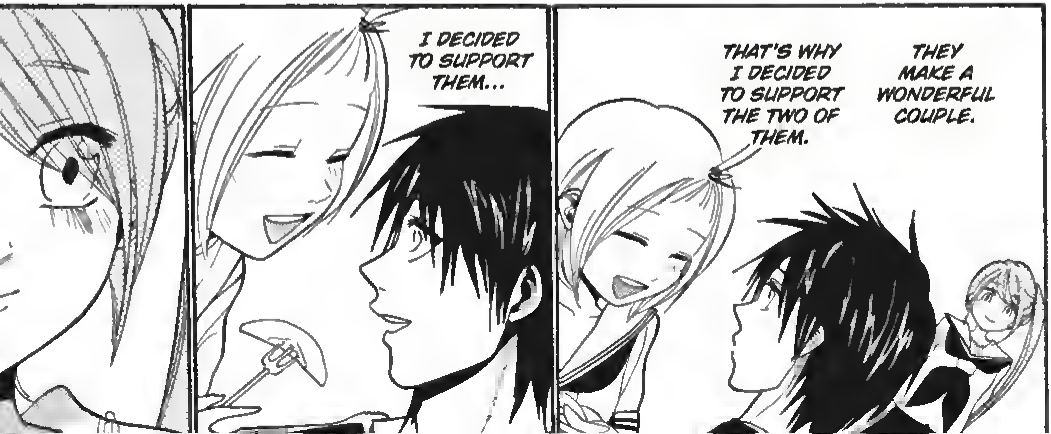
PA (FWAP)
!!
IROHA-DONOOOO!
GACHA (CLACK)


.....
ONII-CHAN HAS ALREADY TAKEN MOMOKO-SENPAI AS HIS WIFE...
WHAT AM I DOING!?
Y-
YES !?


NIKO (GRIN)
WOULD YOU DO US THE PLEASURE OF EATING DINNER WITH US?

HUH?
IROHA... CHAN?
DID YOU COME TO CHECK ON ME...?
A VERY KIND SENPAI.
.....
...CER- CERTAINLY!


.....
HEH HEH!
AND A VERY KIND KOUSHI- ONII- CHAN.
...THANKS.


I DECIDED TO SUPPORT THEM...
THAT'S WHY I DECIDED TO SUPPORT THE TWO OF THEM.
THEY MAKE A WONDERFUL COUPLE.

...AND YET...
IROHA-CHAN?
WHAT SHOULD I DO?

...ONII-CHAN.
I STILL LOVE YOU...
I DON'T WANT TO GO HOME YET...
.....
.....
...UH, I MEAN...
IT'S LATE AND ALL.
WHY DON'T YOU GET GOING?

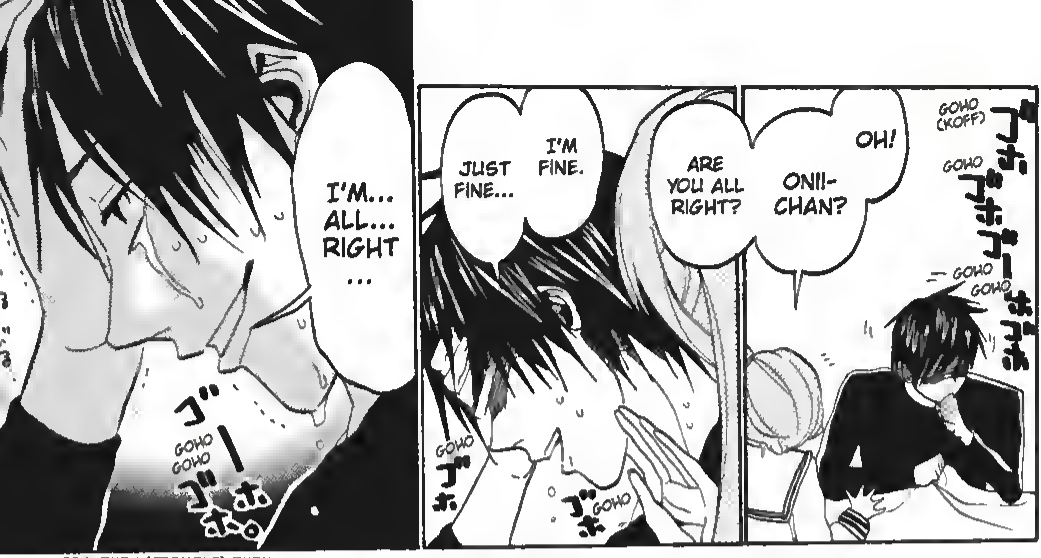
...DON'T WORRY ABOUT IT.
AS FAR AS HELP GOES...
...I'M STAYING HERE...
UNTIL YOU GET BETTER ...
I'M NOT LEAVING.
I'VE GOT HER AFTER ALL.
...TO HELP YOU RECOVER ...
BUT I WANT...
BUT...

DID YOU KNOW...
TELL ME, ONII-CHAN...
.....?
...THAT PASSING ON A COLD WILL CURE IT?
SFX: GOHO (KOFF) GOHO
YOU SHOULD!
I DON'T CARE.
YOU'LL CATCH IT!
.....
OH, PLEASE.
THAT'S SUPER-STITION ...
HEY!
STAY BACK!
.....
YOU REALLY WILL GET SICK!

MAKE ME SICK.
?
GEHO (KOFF)
HUH!?
GEHO
SU (SSK)

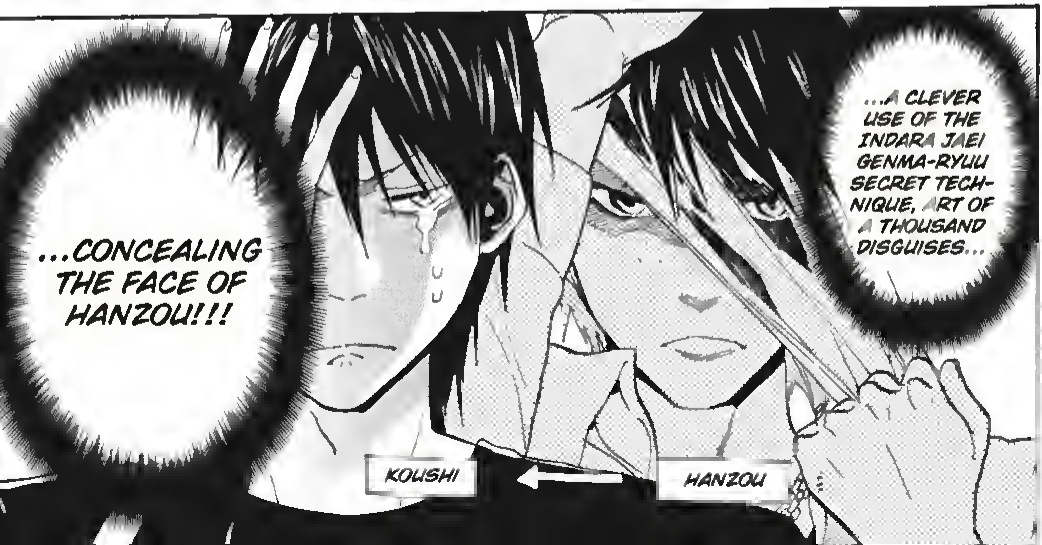
!
HUH ...!?
NO...

HA (GASP)
GACHAAAN (CRAAASH)
HA HA HA HA
PA (PWIP)
IT'S AN OLD WIVES' TALE...
YOU'RE RIGHT!
J-JUST KIDDING!
.....
.....!
GIRI (GRIT)
WHAT AM I DOING?
.....

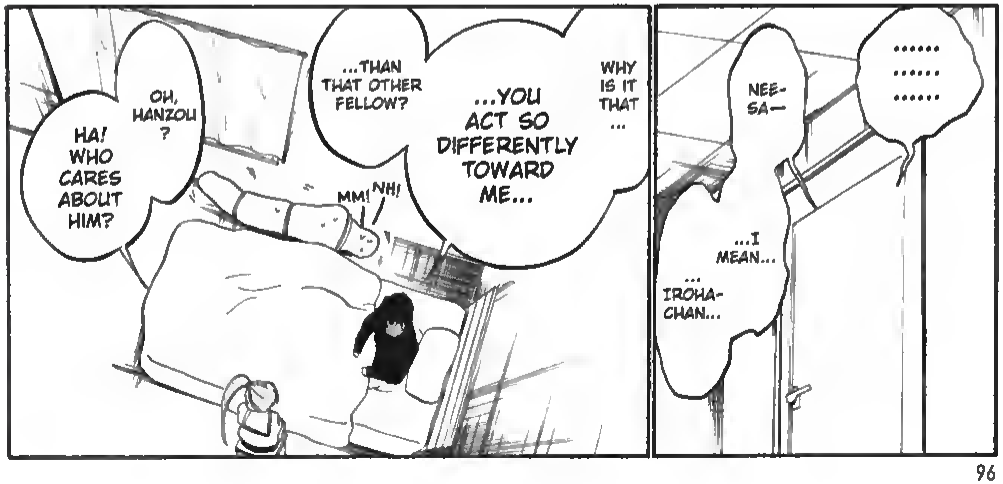


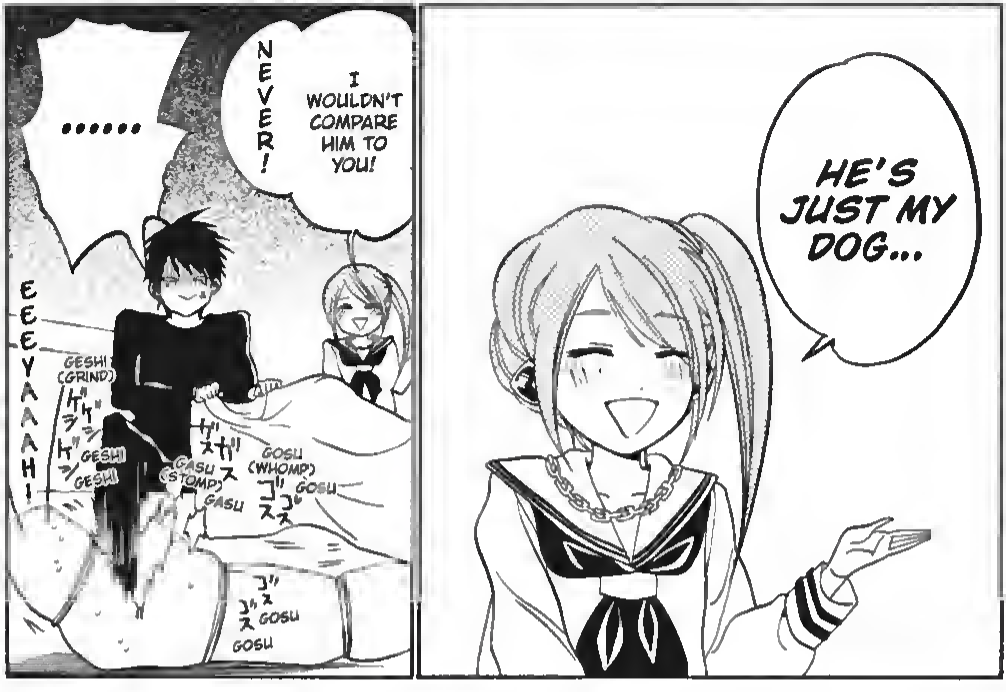
SFX: BURU (TREMBLE) BURU

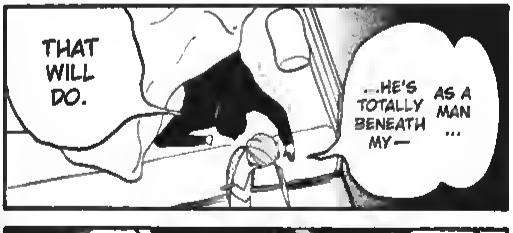
...THAT THIS IS NOT THE REAL KOUSHI INUZUKA.
THE MORE CLEVER AND PERCEPTIVE OF YOU WILL PERHAPS HAVE NOTICED ...
IT IS, IN FACT..
I'M SO JEALOUS...
DAMMIT ...!!
CURSE YOU, KOUSHI INUZUKA!

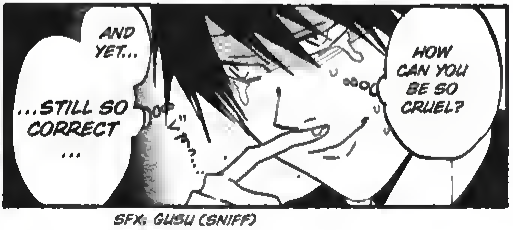

...CONCEALING THE FACE OF HANZOU!!!
...A CLEVER USE OF THE INDARA JAEI GENMA-RYUU SECRET TECHNIQUE, ART OF A THOUSAND DISGUISES...
KOUSHI
HANZOU

NEE-SAAAN! WHY DO YOU ONLY SHOW MERCY AND SOFTNESS TO HIM!?
RR
RR
RR
GRR
RR
HANZOU
HELLP
KOUSHI
MEEE!!


HA! WHO CARES ABOUT HIM?
OH, HANZOU?
...THAN THAT OTHER FELLOW?
...YOU ACT SO DIFFERENTLY TOWARD ME...
WHY IS IT THAT ...
MM!
NH!
.....
.....
.....
NEE-SA—
...I MEAN...
... IROHA-CHAN...



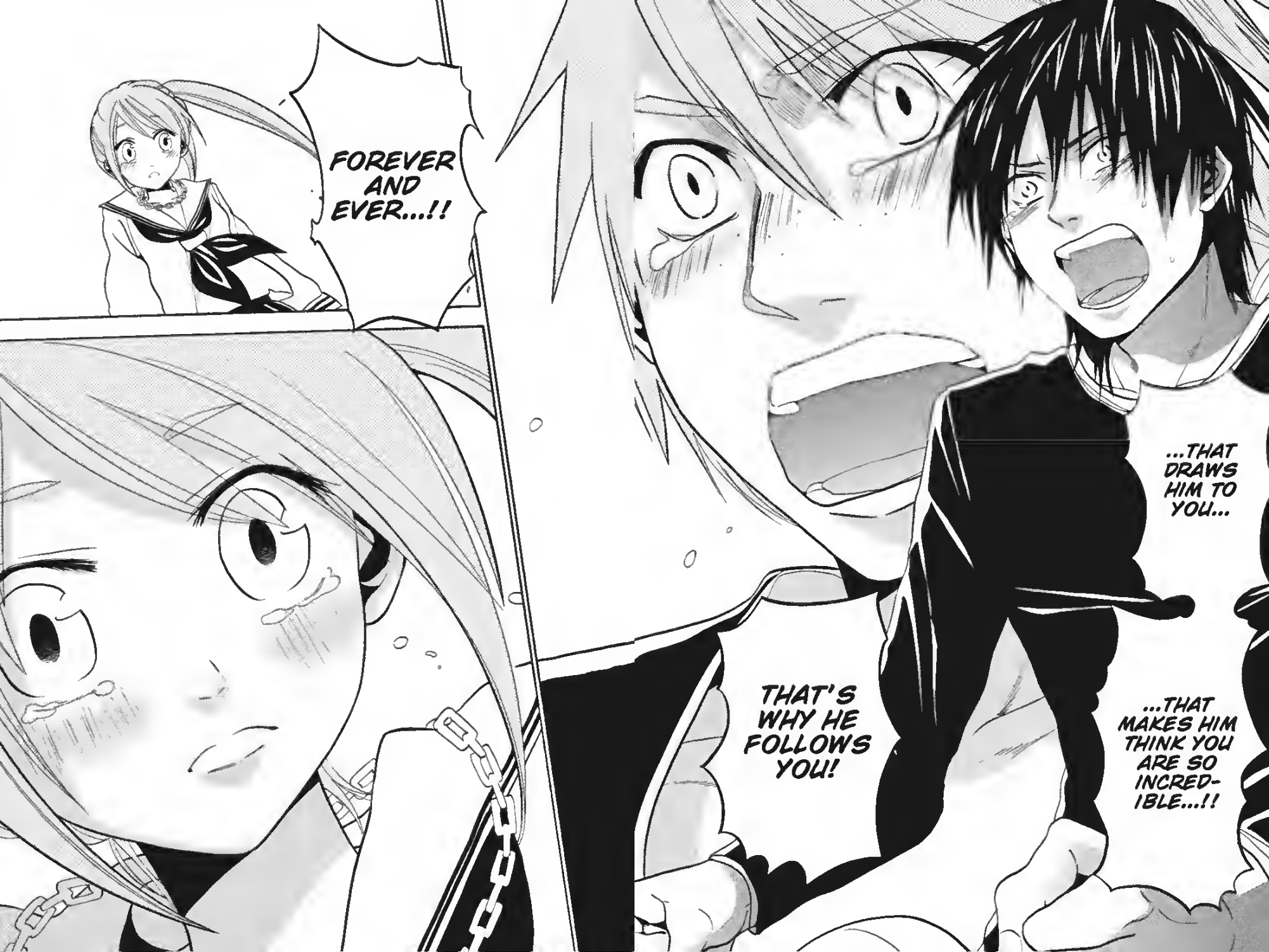


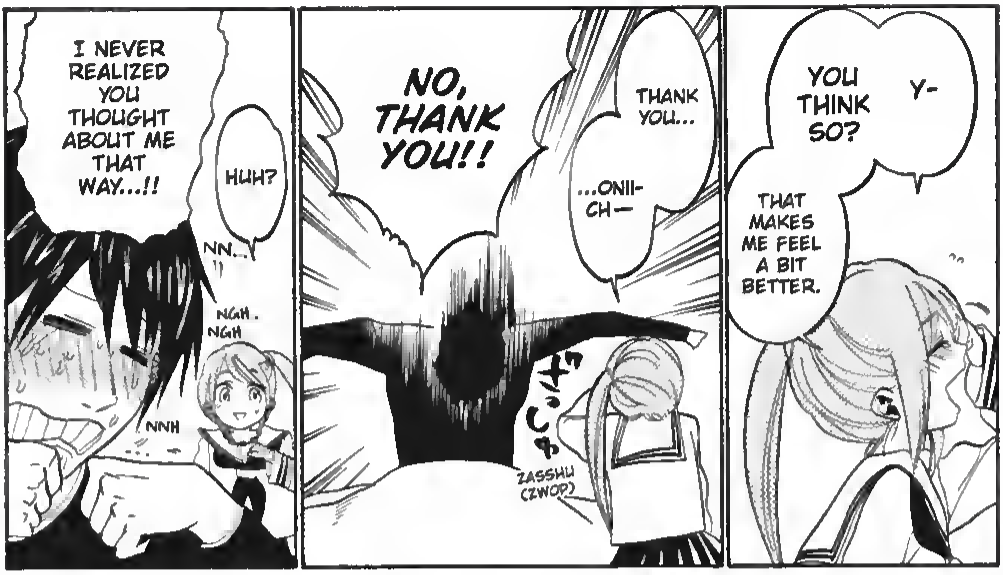


SFX: GUSU (SNIFF)

.....
HE'S THE ONLY ONE...
...WHO'S STUCK WITH ME.
THE LEADER OF THE MIYAMOTO CLAN...
...MY FATHER, THAT IS...
...IS A VERY GENTLE AND QUIET MAN...
A VERY MEDIOCRE...
...AND POWERLESS LEADER FOR A CLAN.
OUR MEMBERS HAVE LEFT, ONE AFTER ANOTHER...
THIS MUST NOT STAND!
I MUST ACT...
I MUST BE A FIERCE AND STRICT LEADER INSTEAD!
BUT EVEN STILL ...
... THEY HAVEN'T ...
... STAYED ...
...WITH ME...

BUT HE'S STUCK AROUND FOR ME.
NEE-SAN...!!
.....
.....!!
IT'S THAT SIDE OF YOU...
...YOU ALWAYS GET BACK UP AND MOVE FORWARD ...
EVEN WHEN YOU FAIL ..
NEVER!!
...WHEN HE THINKS I JUST CAN'T DO ANYTHING RI—
EVEN THOUGH I'M SURE THERE ARE DAYS ...
.....
.....
THAT'S NOT TRUE AT ALL!!

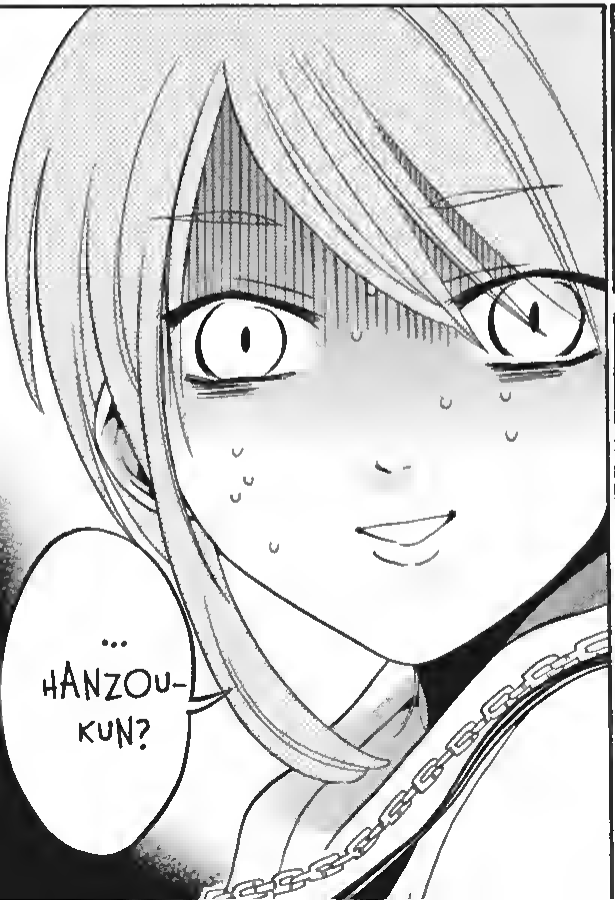

FOREVER AND EVER...!!
...THAT DRAWS HIM TO YOU...
...THAT MAKES HIM THINK YOU ARE SO INCRED-IBLE...!!
THAT'S WHY HE FOLLOWS YOU!

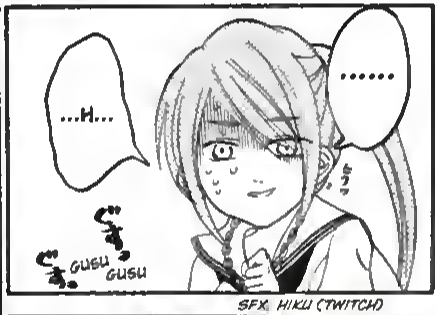

I NEVER REALIZED YOU THOUGHT ABOUT ME THAT WAY...!!
HUH?
NN...!!
NGH. NGH
NNH
NO, THANK YOU!!
THANK YOU...
...ONII-CHAN
ZASSHU (ZWOP)
Y-
YOU THINK SO?
THAT MAKES ME FEEL A BIT BETTER.

I'LL MAKE UP FOR THE OTHERS !!
...NO, HUNDREDS !!
THE DOZENS ...
GUSU
GUSU
GUSU
UM, ONII...?
GUSU (SNIFF)
GUSU
I'LL GET STRONGER!
I'LL TRAIN HARDER!

BERI (PEEEL)
GOSHI
BIRI

...FOR ALL THE MEN WHO LEFT...
NN NGH
I WILL MAKE UP...
GOSHI
GOSHI
GOSHI
GOSHI (RUB)
GOSHI





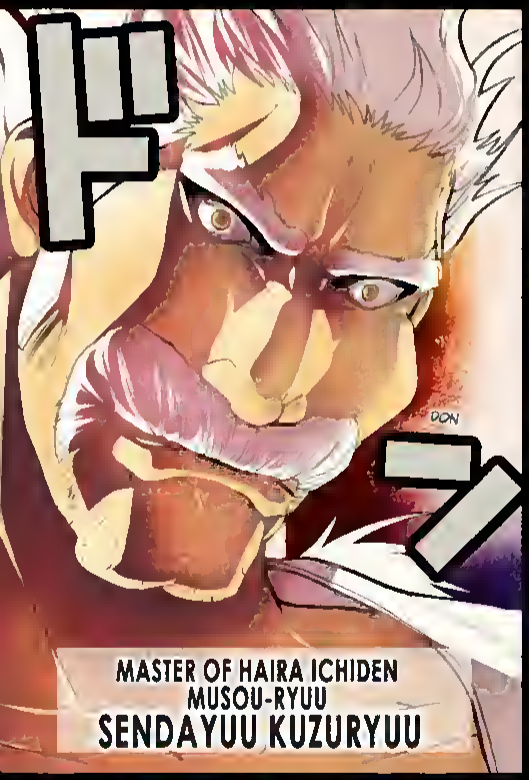
SFX: IKU (TWITCH)

YES, NEE-SAN?
NEE N-...
YOU RAT...
THAT WAS YOU...
...THE WHOLE TIME ...?
ACK!

YOU SAW EVERY-THING?
!!
PISHA (SPLITCH)
HE'S BETTER !?
IS THAT KOUSHI-DONO?
OH!
GYAAAAA
GYAAAA
GYAAAA
HOW DID YOU CURE HIM?
IROHA-DONO!

CHAPTER 18. IROHA MIYAMOTO'S ROUGH TREATMENT – END

GOGOGOGOGOGO
(RRRUMBLE)


DON
MASTER OF HAIRA ICHIDEN
MUSOU-RYUU
SENDAYUU KUZURYUU

DON
(BOOM)
MASTER OF BASARA FUDOU
SHINGAN-RYUU
UNKEN INUZUKA

...OF THE REASONS FOR WHICH I HAVE CALLED YOU HERE
SHIIN
(SILENCE)
...SURELY YOU ARE ALL AWARE...
LEADERS OF THE TWELVE CLANS...

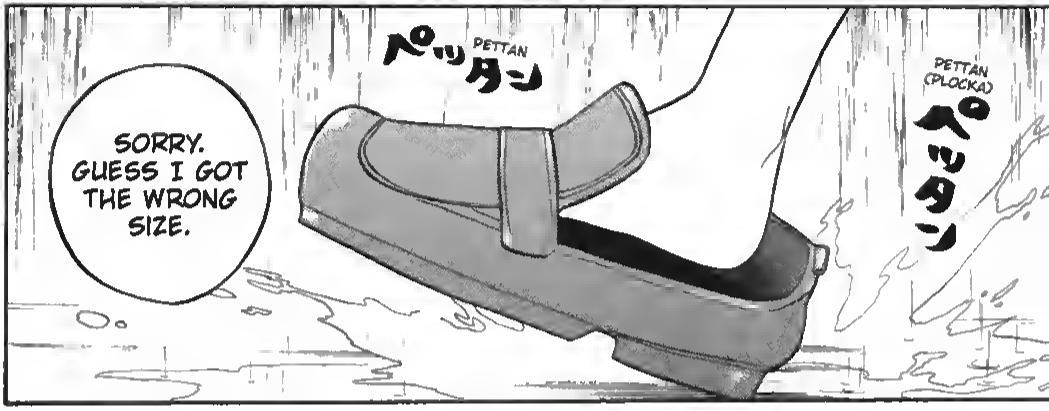
ギロォッ
GIROO (GLARE)
I WILL CHOOSE TO IGNORE THE ATTEMPTS YOU HAVE MADE ON MY SON'S LIFE...
...AS LONG AS YOU COME TOGETHER EAST AND WEST!!
HEAR THAT ...?
WE'RE... TELLING YOU TO GET ALONG FROM NOW ON...
CHIRA (PEEK)
SHIIIIN (SILENCE)
.....
@IKU (TWITCH)
@IKU
ゴゴゴゴゴゴゴゴゴ
GOGOGOGOGO (RRRUMBLE)
ANY COM-PLAINTS? LET'S HEAR 'EM...!!

ZOOOOO (CHILLLLL)
...AND JOIN HANDS IN PEACE!
LET US BE GLAD FOR OUR LEADERS' MAGNANIMITY...
SHIIIN
NOW, NOW, FRIENDS!
N-
SU (STAND)
TSK! THE BOY... HE DIDN'T SHOW...
I DON'T SEE THE KOGANEI AMONG US.
BUT WAIT, KUZU-RYUU ...
THAT'S IT IN A NUTSHELL!
YEP!
COR-RECT?
THE WAR IS OVER.
BOTH SIDES ARE ALLIED NOW.

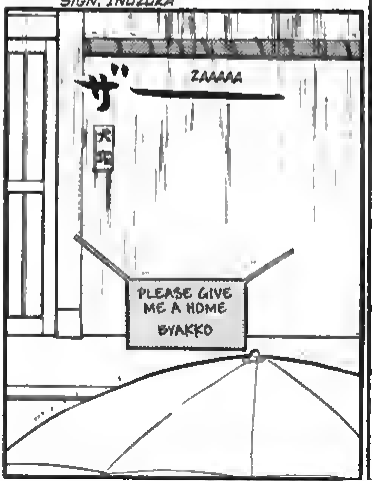
"BOY"?
LEADER-SHIP OF THE KOGANEI CLAN..
...RECENTLY PASSED DOWN TO THE NEXT GENERATION.
THE PROBLEM IS...
I HEARD THAT THE ELDEST SON HAS TAKEN THE REINS.
THEY HAVE FIVE CHILDREN.
...THE EYES THOSE BRATS HAVE...
DANGER-OUS, FERAL EYES...
...FULL OF MALICE ...!!

19. MOTHER IS THE BOND

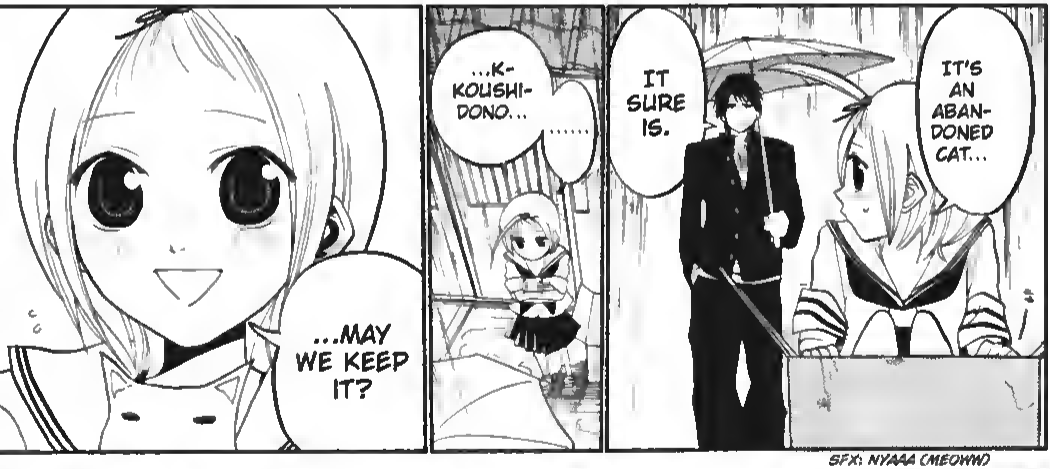
ザ
ZAAAAA
(FSHHHHD)


SORRY. GUESS I GOT THE WRONG SIZE.
ペッタン
PETTAN
ペタン
PETTAN
(PLOCKA)

NYAAAAA
(MEOWWW)


SIGN. INUZUKA
ザ
ZAAAAA
犬塚
PLEASE GIVE ME A HOME
BYAKKO

I DON'T MIND AT ALL!
THESE ARE FINE!
WHAT SIZE DO YOU USUALLY WEAR?
PETTAN
ペッタン
PETTAN
ペッタン



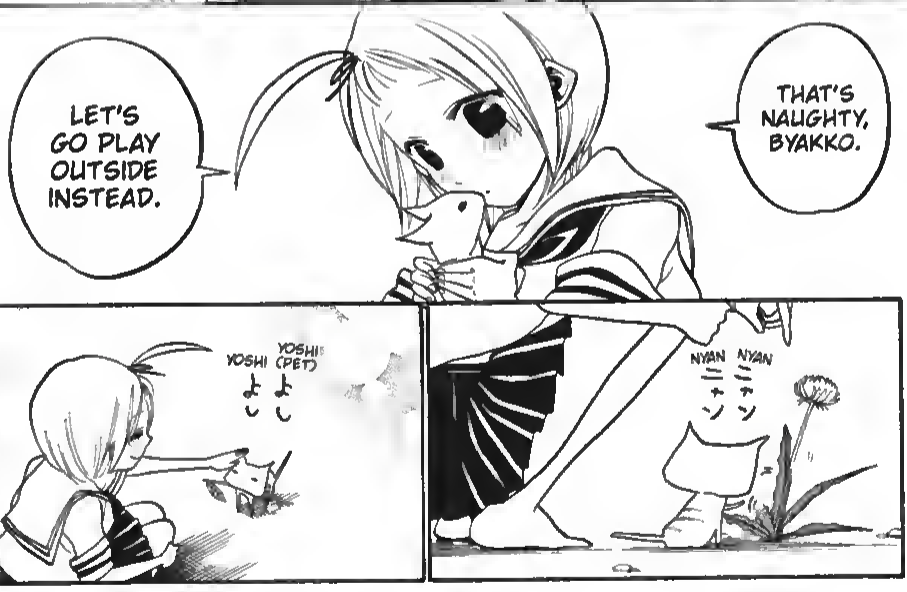
SFX: NYAAA (MEOWW)

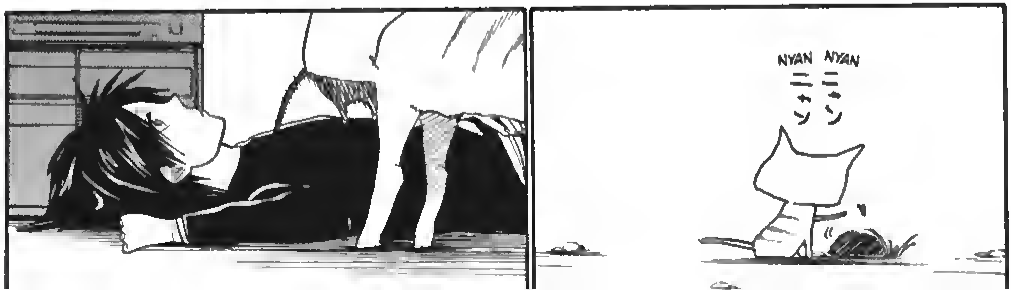
LET'S KEEP IT!

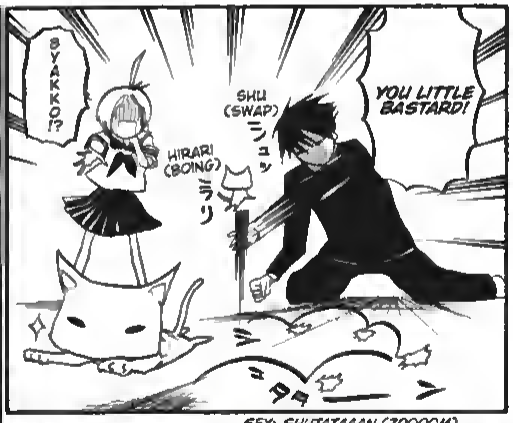
LET'S ABSO-LUTELY NOT!!!

HEE-HEE-HEE...
NYAN
NYAN (MROW)
WE HAVE TAKEN IN A CAT, BYAKKO.
BYAKKO!
LET'S PLAY, BYAKKO!
ALL RIGHT, FINE!
BUT ONLY IF YOU TAKE CARE OF IT!
WAAAH! WAAAAAH!
LOST THE BATTLE OF WILLS
FUWA FUWA
ふぁふぁ わわ
NYAN NYAN
ニャン ニャン
FUWA (FLUF)
ふぁふぁ わわ

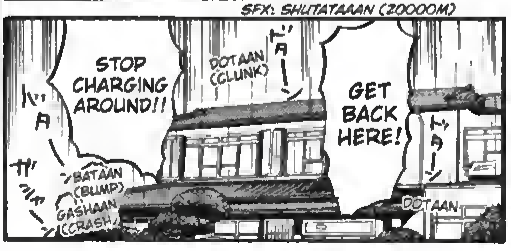
GYAAAAAAAA!
NYAN (MEOW)


LET'S GO PLAY OUTSIDE INSTEAD.
THAT'S NAUGHTY, BYAKKO.
YOSHI (PET)
よし
YOSHI
よし
NYAN NYAN
ニャン
ニャン


NYAN NYAN
ニャン
ニャン



SFX: SHUTATAAAN (20000M)



SFX: IRA (PISSED) IRA IRA IRA
I CAN'T LET IT GET ME SO UPSET.
THIS IS NO GOOD...
NOT EVEN READING
DAMMIT... IT'S JUST A CAT...
NYAAA (MEOW)
...I'M GOING TO KICK IT RIGHT—
I WILL TAKE CARE OF IT! I PROMISE YOU!!
IF YOU CAN'T TAKE CARE OF THE CAT...
GOGOGOGOGO (RRRUMBLE)

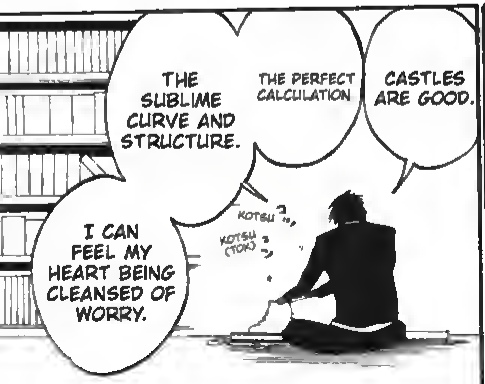
...AND HERE IT IS!
GAPAA (SHHLINK)
...THAT CAN CALM MY SPIRIT AND RETURN ME TO NORMAL ...!!
THERE'S ONLY ONE THING...

どーん

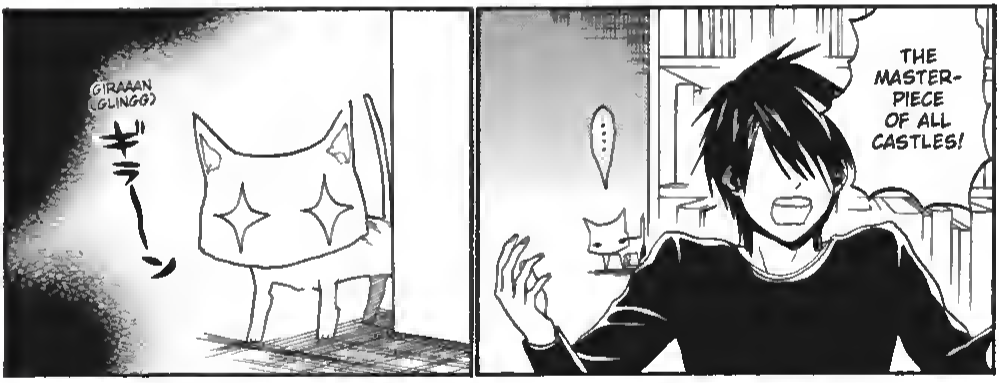
DOOON (TA-DAA)

小田原城

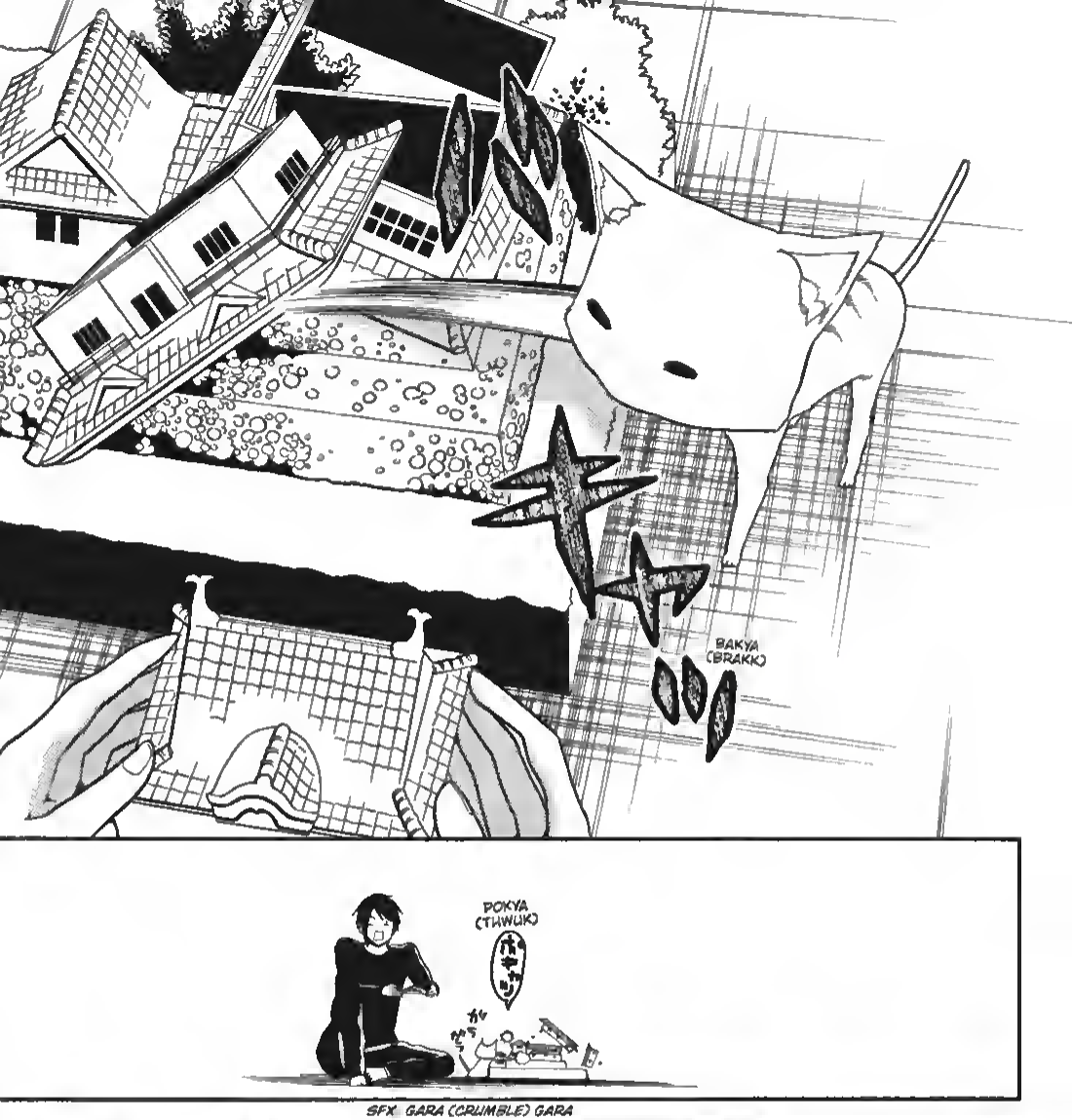
MODEL- ODAWARA CASTLE



TRULY IMMORTAL!
NOT EVEN THE GREAT GENERALS TAKEDA AND UESUGI COULD TAKE IT DOWN!
THE SUPREME FORTRESS ...
ODAWARA CASTLE.
IMPECCABLY SITUATED TO BE IMPERVIOUS TO ATTACK.
日本の名城シリーズ
ODAWARA CASTLE
AJTHETIC SCALE 1 350
小田原城


GIRAAAN (GLINGG)
ギラーン
THE MASTER-PIECE OF ALL CASTLES!

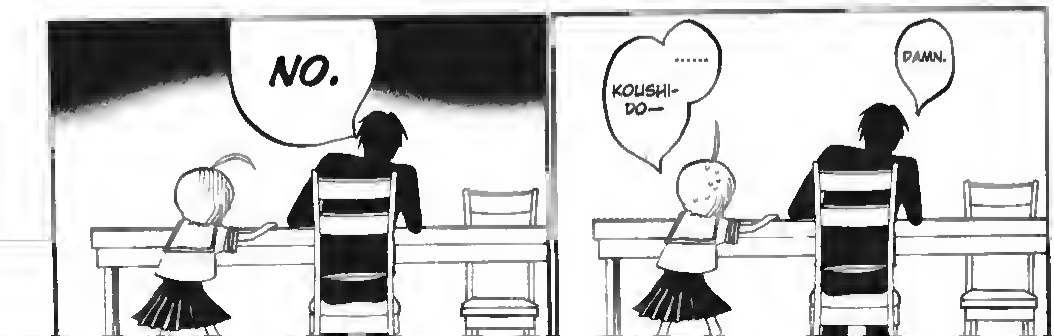
...BE COMPLETE ...!!
...WILL AT LAST...
...BUT FINALLY, MY EIGHT-MONTH PROJECT ...
I'VE BEEN TOO BUSY TO GIVE IT ANY TIME RECENTLY ...
TOP FLOOR PART



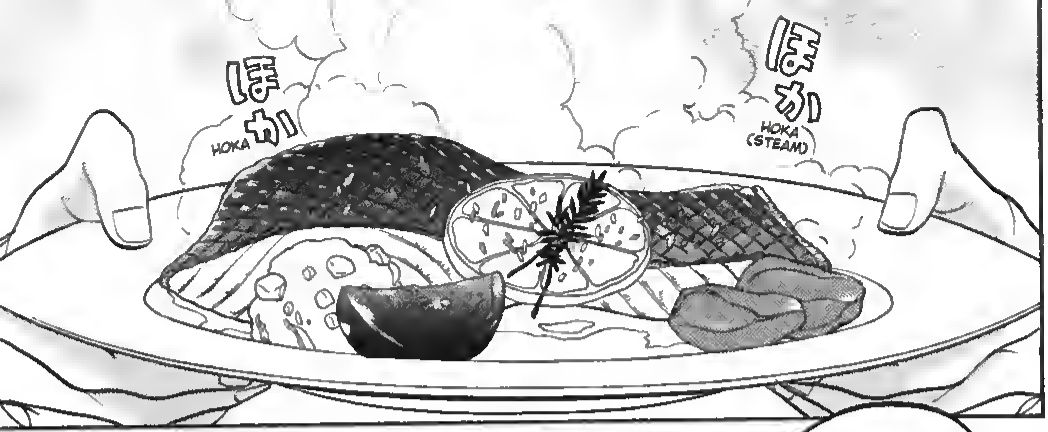
SFX: GARA (CRUMBLE) GARA

CURSE YOUUUUUUU...
GARA
GARA (CRUMBLE)
NO
GARA
GARA
GARA
GARA
GARA
GARA
!!
...FIENNND!

SHU
SHU
SHU
SHU
HIRARI (BOING)
ヒラリ
シュ
SHU (SWAP)

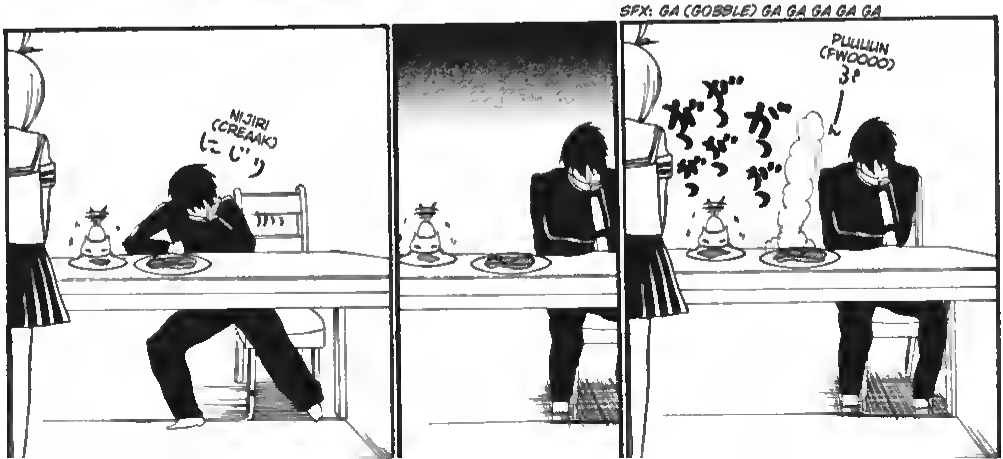

NO.
.....
KOUSHI-DO—
DAMN.

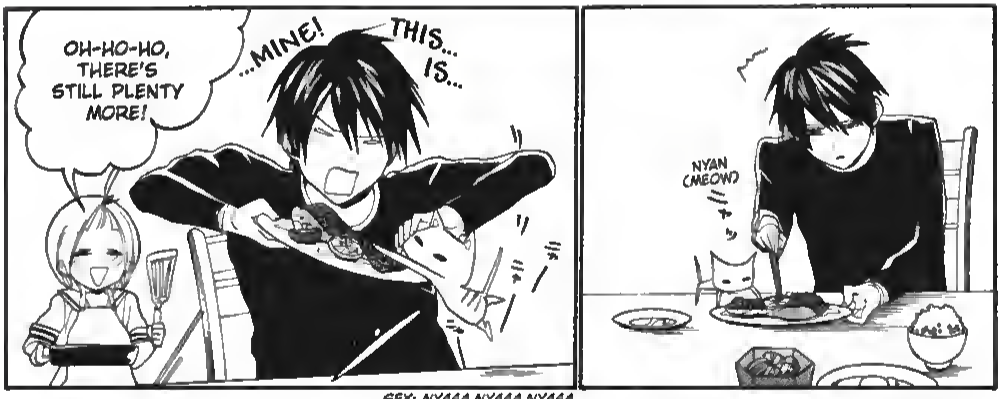
.....
BUT... BUT...
K— .....
KOUSHI- D—
NO.
ABSO- LUTELY NOT.
....
.....
GET RID OF IT!
I SAID NO!
THE LARGER A FAMILY IS...
...THE MORE FUN IT IS...
.....
BUT ...
...VERY WELL, THEN...
...ONE LAST TIME...?
THE THREE OF US...AS A FAMILY?
BUT WOULD YOU ALLOW US...
...TO EAT DINNER TOGETHER ...


ほかHOKA
ほかHOKA (STEAM)

IT'S A MEUNIÈRE...
...OF SABLE-FISH.
LET'S EAT TOGETHER.

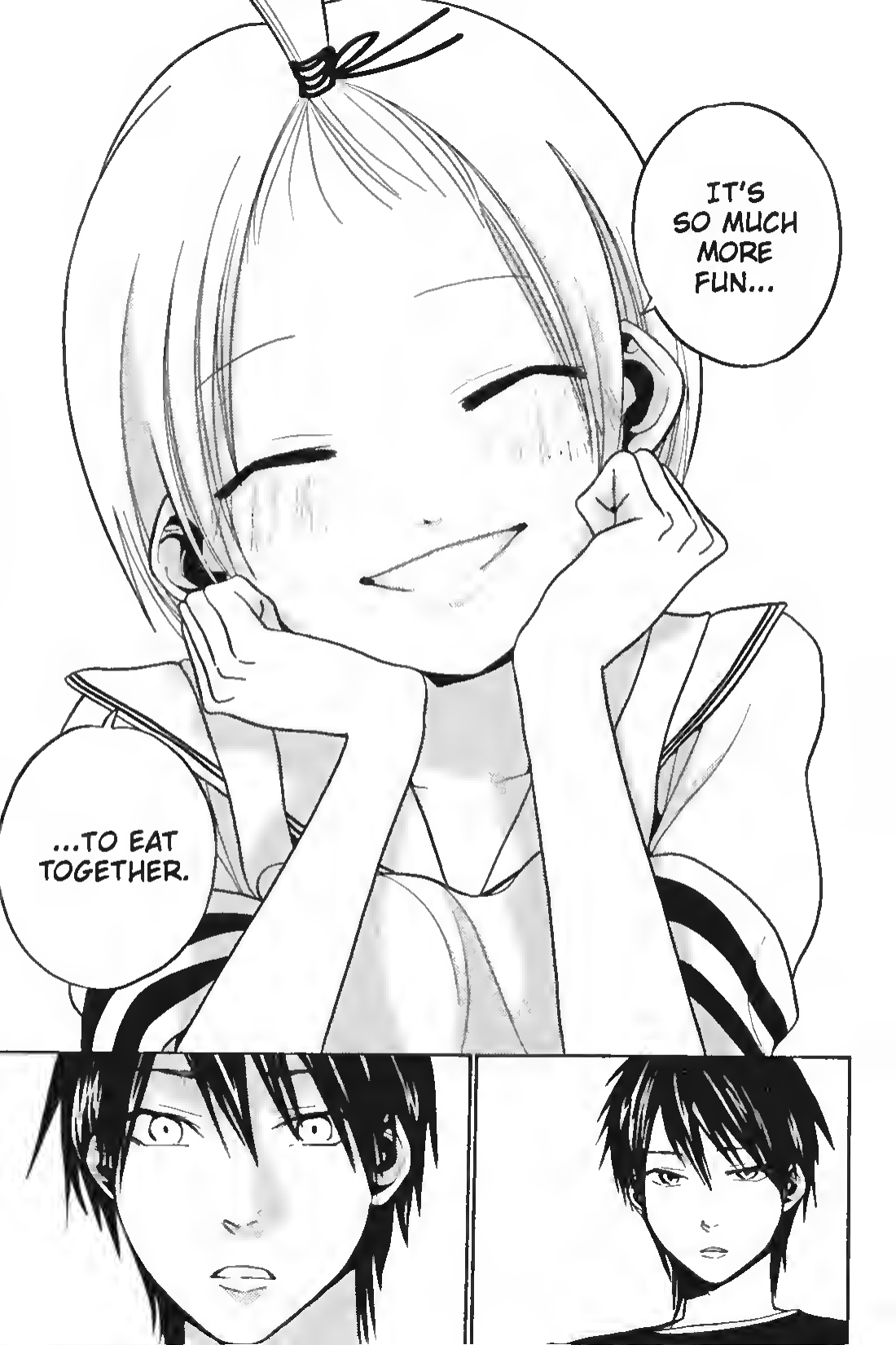
I'VE PREPARED FISH MEUNIÈRE TONIGHT.
ピクッ
PIKU (TWITCH)
HIS FAVORITE


NIJIRI (CREAK)
にじり
SFX: GA (GOBBLE) GA GA GA GA GA
PUUUUN (FWOOOO)
がつがつがつがつ



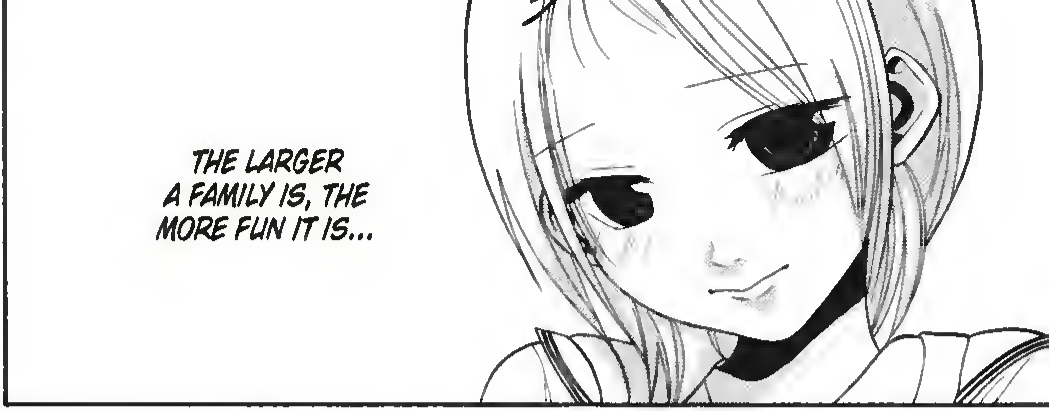
SFX: NYAAA NYAAA NYAAA

SFX: NIKO (GRIN) NIKO


IT'S SO MUCH MORE FUN...
...TO EAT TOGETHER.

IT'S MUCH MORE FUN TO EAT TOGETHER.

FOR YEARS ...
...I HAVE LIVED ALONE WITH MY FATHER. THIS TAKES ME BACK...
...TO EVEN BEFORE THEN.
THERE'S STILL MORE!

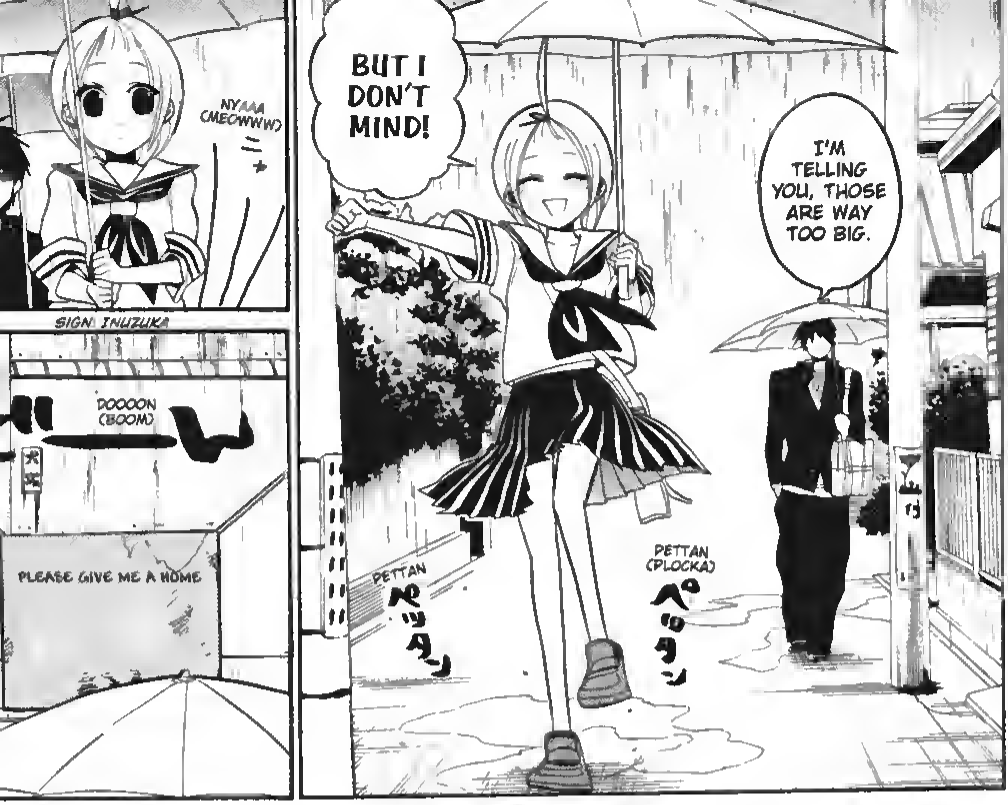

THE LARGER A FAMILY IS, THE MORE FUN IT IS...

SO THAT'S WHAT SHE MEANT.

Y-YOU TRULY MEAN IT!?
I WILL, KOUSHI-DONO!
JUST TAKE CARE OF IT.
AND SO, BYAKKO'S INDUCTION TO THE HOME WAS MADE OFFICIAL.

SFX: MOGU (MMF) MOGU MOGU MOGU
I'LL LET HER OFF BECAUSE OF THE FISH.

ZAAAAA (FSHHHH)
THE NEXT DAY


NYAAA (MEOWWW)
SIGN: INUZUKA
DOOOON (BOOM)
PLEASE GIVE ME A HOME
BUT I DON'T MIND!
I'M TELLING YOU, THOSE ARE WAY TOO BIG.
PETTAN ペッタン
PETTAN (PLOCKA) ペッタン

NYAAA
NYAAA
NYAAA
PLEASE GIVE ME A HOME

CAN WE...KEEP THAT ONE TOO?
...CAT.
ANOTHER ABANDONED ...
I KNOW ...
KOUSHI-DONO...

PLEASE
E A HOME

パタッ
PATA
(THUMP)

ブーン
BUUUN
(BZZZ)

WAIT, INUZUKA.
THAT WAS HIS HOME.
SORRY TO BOTHER YOU!

SFX: PURU (SHAKE) PURU PURU

FORMER SHINDARA
RETTETSU-RYUU ASSASSIN
TENKA KOGANEI

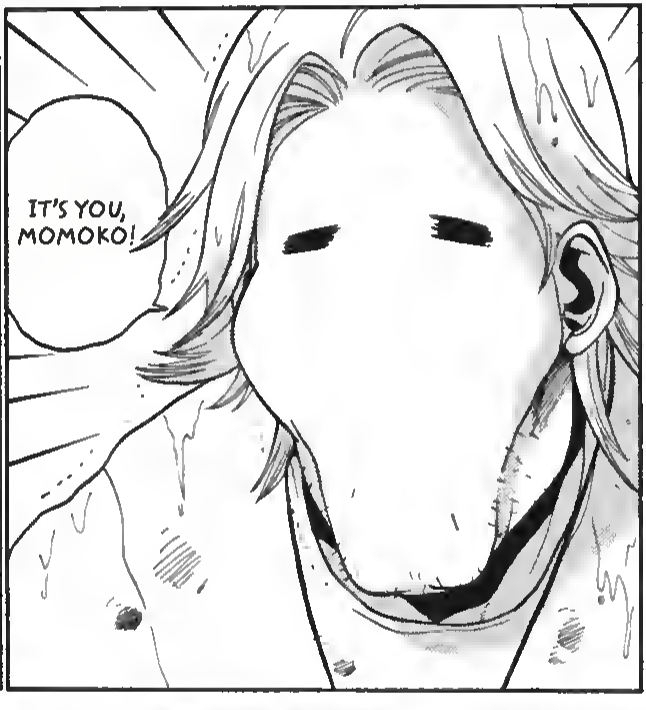
CAN WE KEEP HIM?
?
← WASN'T WATCHING
WHAA-AAT!!?

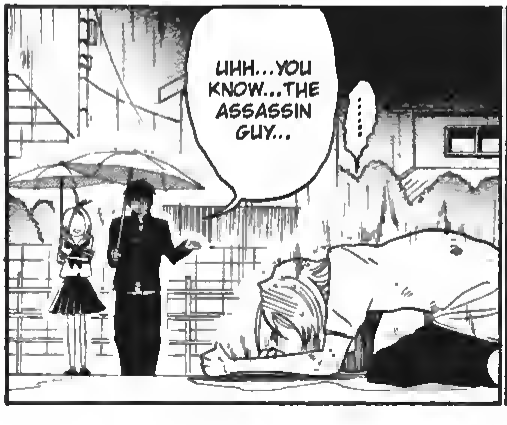
GYAAAAAA
NOOOOO!!!
AH!
OH! MOMOKO! ♡
CHAPTER 19: MOTHER IS THE BOND – END

20. RETURN OF THE TIGER

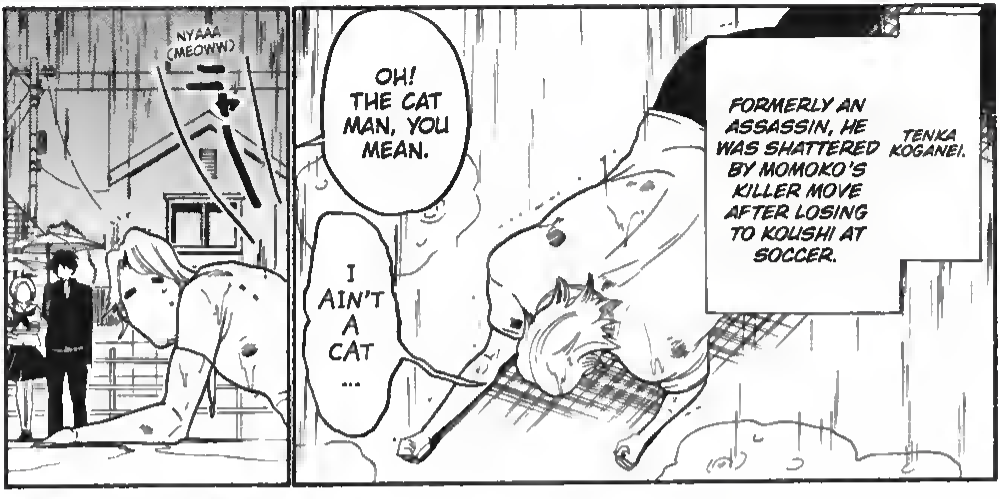
ZAAAAAA (FSHHHHH)
MOMOKO!

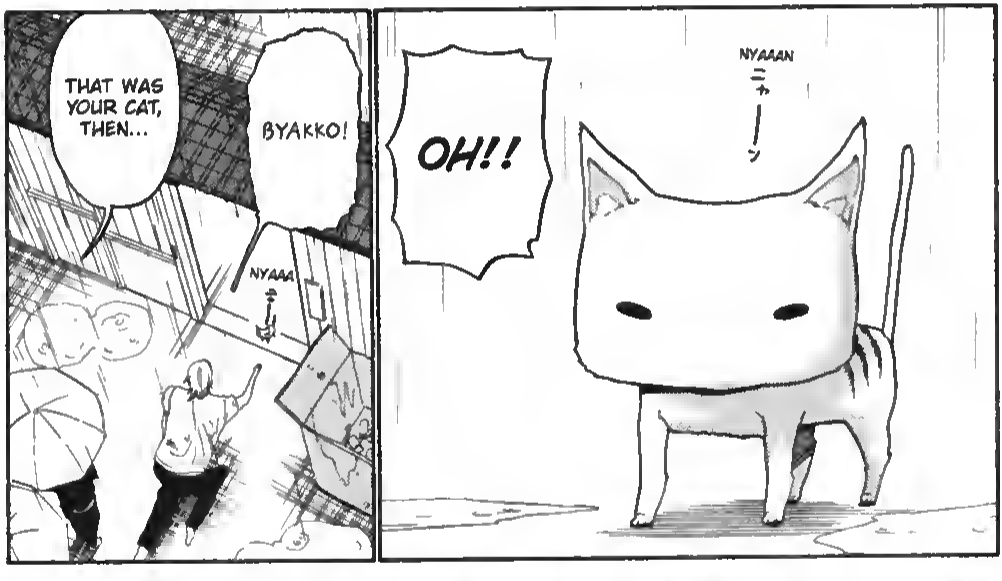
LONG TIME NO SEE!
I'VE MISSED YOU...
GOSH, IN THE TIME SINCE I LAST SAW YOU...
...YOU'VE GOTTEN SO P-PRETTY...

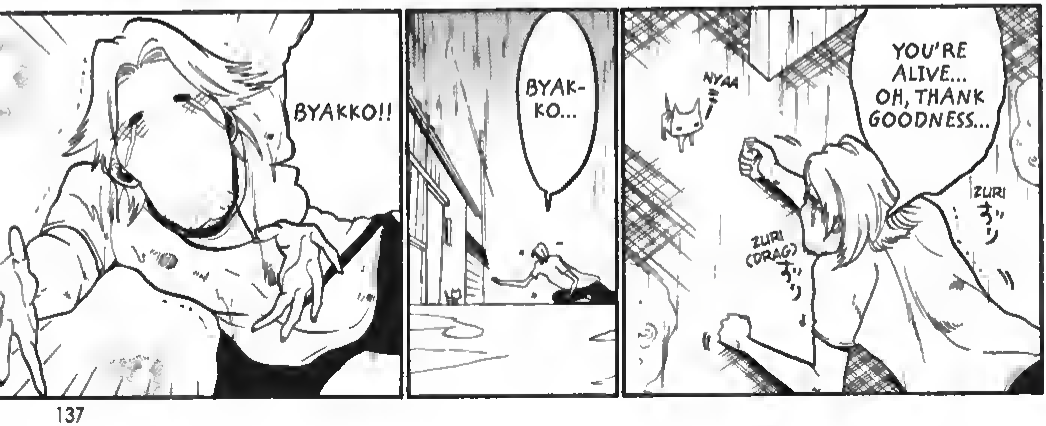

IT'S YOU, MOMOKO!

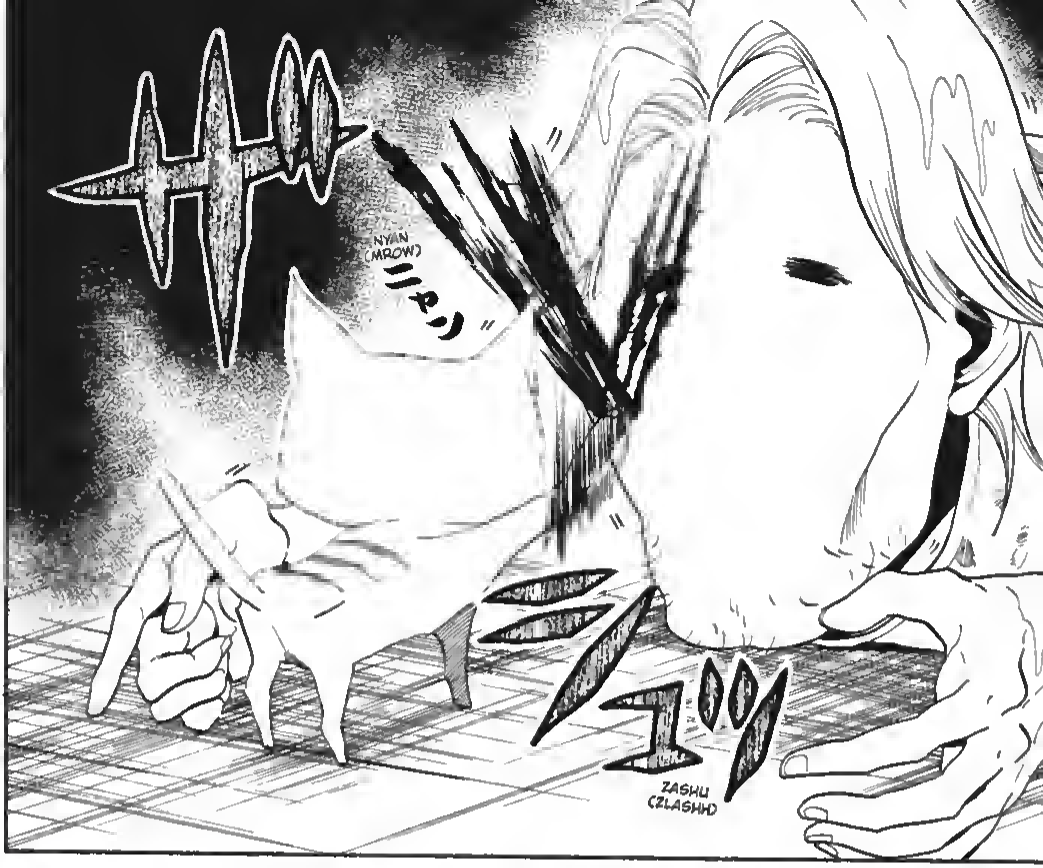

UHH...YOU KNOW...THE ASSASSIN GUY...

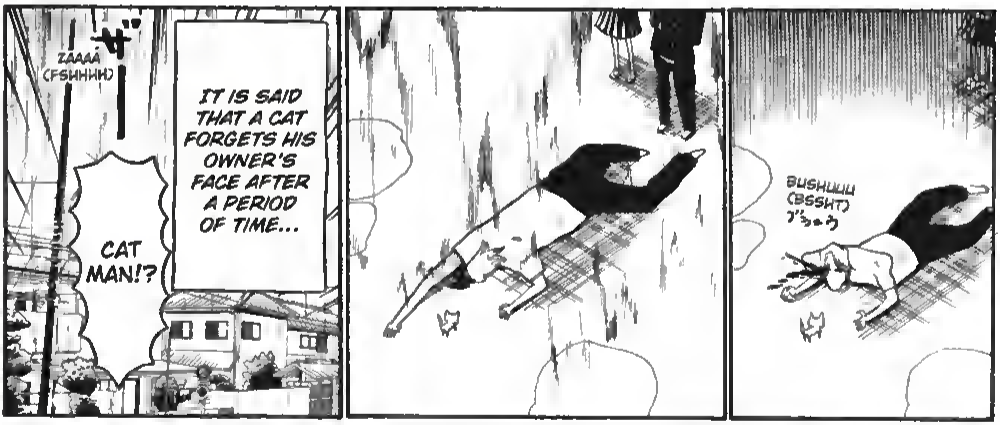
...UMM, WHO ARE YOU...?

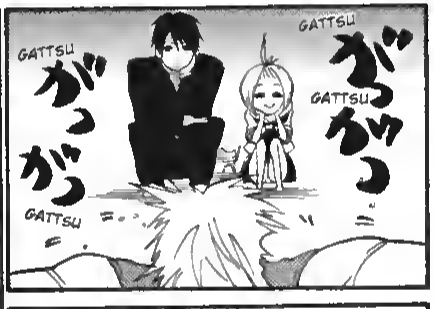

NYAAA (MEOWW)
OH! THE CAT MAN, YOU MEAN.
I AIN'T A CAT ...
FORMERLY AN ASSASSIN, HE WAS SHATTERED BY MOMOKO'S KILLER MOVE AFTER LOSING TO KOUSHI AT SOCCER.
TENKA KOGANEI.


THAT WAS YOUR CAT, THEN...
BYAKKO!
NYAAA
OH!!
NYAAAN

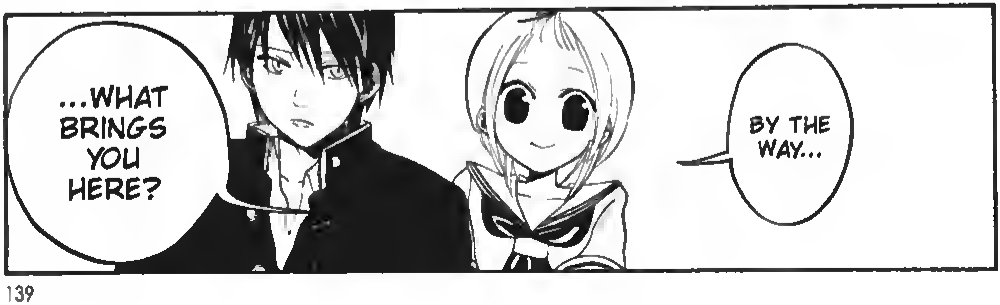

BYAKKO!!
BYAK-KO...
NYAA
YOU'RE ALIVE... OH, THANK GOODNESS...
ZURI (DRAG)
ZURI


NYAN
(MROW)
ZASHU
(ZLASHH)


ZAAAA
(FSHHHH)
IT IS SAID THAT A CAT FORGETS HIS OWNER'S FACE AFTER A PERIOD OF TIME...
CAT MAN!?
BUSHUUU
(BSSHT)

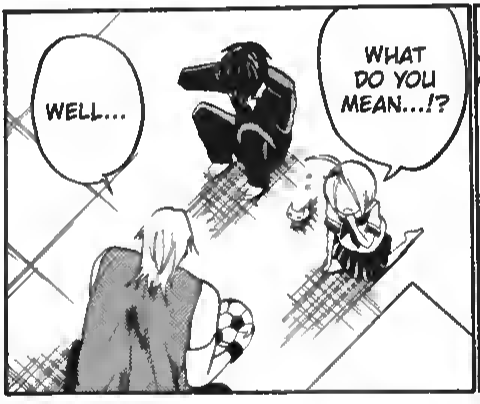


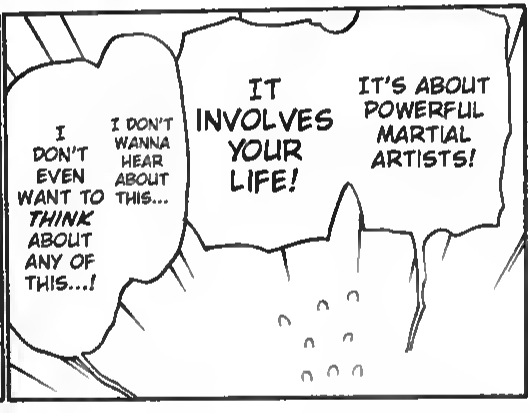
SFX: GO (GLUG) GO GO GO GO



I REALIZE... THIS ISN'T GONNA SOUND GOOD...
.....
...AND IT'S KIND OF A LONG STORY TO TELL...
ABOUT THAT...
...RIGHT...
.....
BAD VIBES
BUT YOU NEED TO HEAR IT.
.....
GET OUT.
YEAH.
...INU-ZUKA!

I DON'T WANNA HEAR IT.
I DIDN'T EVEN TELL YOU YET !!!


WELL...
WHAT DO YOU MEAN...!?


I DON'T EVEN WANT TO THINK ABOUT ANY OF THIS...!
I DON'T WANNA HEAR ABOUT THIS...
IT INVOLVES YOUR LIFE!
IT'S ABOUT POWERFUL MARTIAL ARTISTS!

THERE ARE FIVE KOGANE! SIBLINGS?

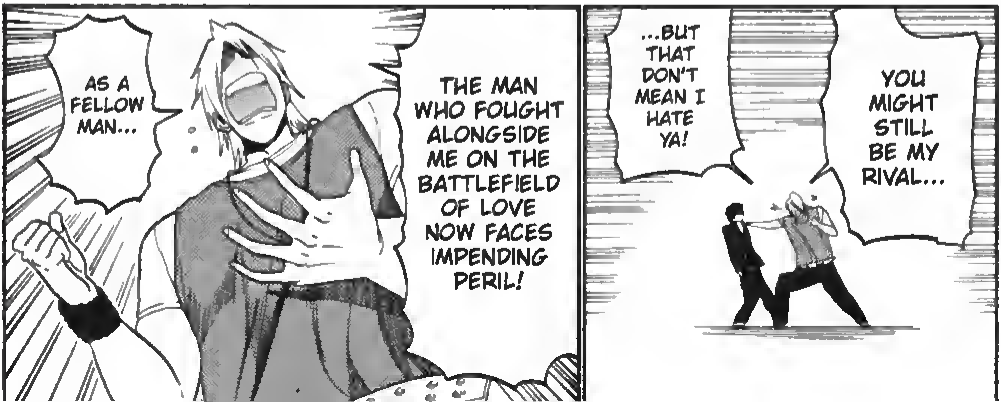
.....
THE TRUTH IS...

...AND ONE MORE BROTHER, AT THE TOP.
AND, YOU SEE...THE PROBLEM IS...
...MY YOUNGER BROTHER ....
...MY OLDER BROTHER ...
...MY OLDER SISTER ...
YEP. FIVE OF US IN ALL.
ASIDE FROM ME, THERE'S ...
...AFTER YOU, INUZUKA.
...THEY'RE ALL COMING...
KOUSHI'S GUESS
NYAAAN (MREOWWW)
GREAT. YOUR SIBLINGS ...
...ASSAS-SINS?
MORE...
WH-WHAT!? DON'T BE CRAZY!!!
CAN I BEAT THEM WITH PLASTIC BOTTLES TOO...?

THEY'RE NUTS, MAN!! THIS IS BAD NEWS FOR YOU!!
DON'T TREAT THEM LIKE SOME KIND OF JOKE!! YOU'LL WIND UP DEAD!
I SEE THAT YOU'RE SERI-OUS.
BUT LOOK!
.....
... OKAY ...
.....
.....
YOU DON'T GET IT...
B-
WHY DO YOU CARE ABOUT MY LIFE NOW?
YOU TRIED TO KILL ME ONCE ...
YOU WERE AN ASSASSIN, RIGHT?
YOU'RE THE ONE WHO DOESN'T GET IT.
SFX: GONYO (MUTTER) GONYO
.....
.....
YOU KNOW...
BE-CAUSE! UMM...

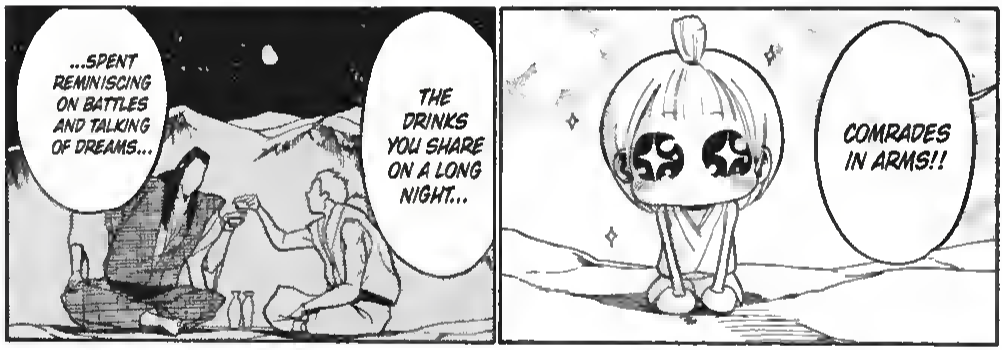
HUH...?
THAT'S WHY!
BECAUSE YOU'RE A COMRADE IN ARMS!
グッ
SFX: ZEH (WHEEZE) ZEH ZEH ZEH
SFX: GU (THUMBS-UP)

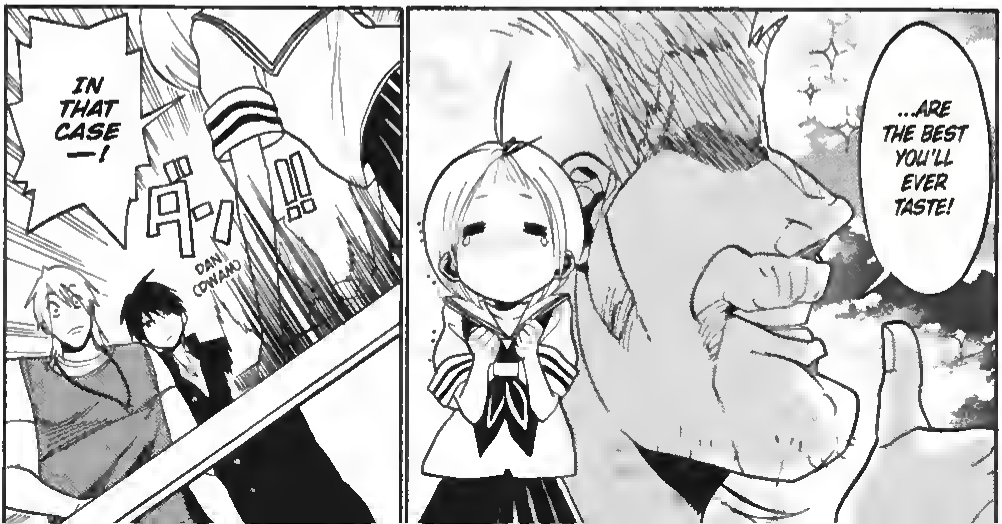
WE LOVED THE SAME WOMAN...
...AND DID BATTLE ON THE FIELD OF LOVE TOGETHER ...
WE WERE ONCE ENEMIES, YES...
HOW-EVER!

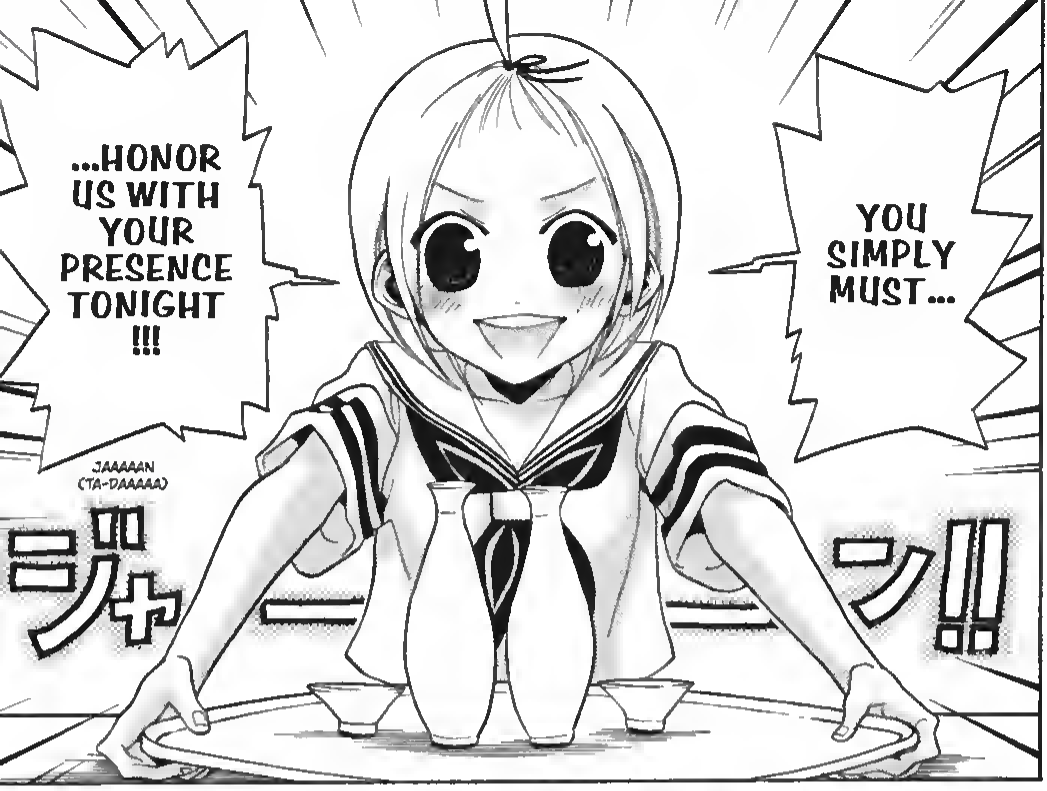

AS A FELLOW MAN...
THE MAN WHO FOUGHT ALONGSIDE ME ON THE BATTLEFIELD OF LOVE NOW FACES IMPENDING PERIL!
...BUT THAT DON'T MEAN I HATE YA!
YOU MIGHT STILL BE MY RIVAL...

ONE SHOT! KA-POW!
...WON'T GET ANYWHERE NEAR YOU! I'LL TAKE THEM OUT!
...MY WICKED SIB-LINGS ...
BUT NEVER FEAR! FOR NOW THAT I AM HERE...
...I CAN'T JUST STAND BY AND WATCH!
SFX: SHU (FSH) SHU SHU
RIGHT?
TALK ABOUT A CREEP ...
COM-RADE IN ARMS? PLEASE
じ
JHHHN (MOVED)
PURU (TREMBLE)
PURU
PURU
PURU
A COMRADE IN ARMS...
OHHHH!
...ON THE BATTLEFIELD OF LOVE!!

A MAN SPEAKS WITH HIS FISTS.
ONCE HE HAS TRADED BLOWS WITH ANOTHER MAN...
... ENEMIES BECOME FRIENDS ...
MOMOKO ...
LET ME TELL YOU ABOUT MEN.
... FATHER ...!
...THE FIERCE, PASSIONATE FRIENDSHIP BETWEEN GENTLEMEN YOU TOLD ME ABOUT...
SO THIS MUST BE...


...SPENT REMINISCING ON BATTLES AND TALKING OF DREAMS...
THE DRINKS YOU SHARE ON A LONG NIGHT...
COMRADES IN ARMS!!

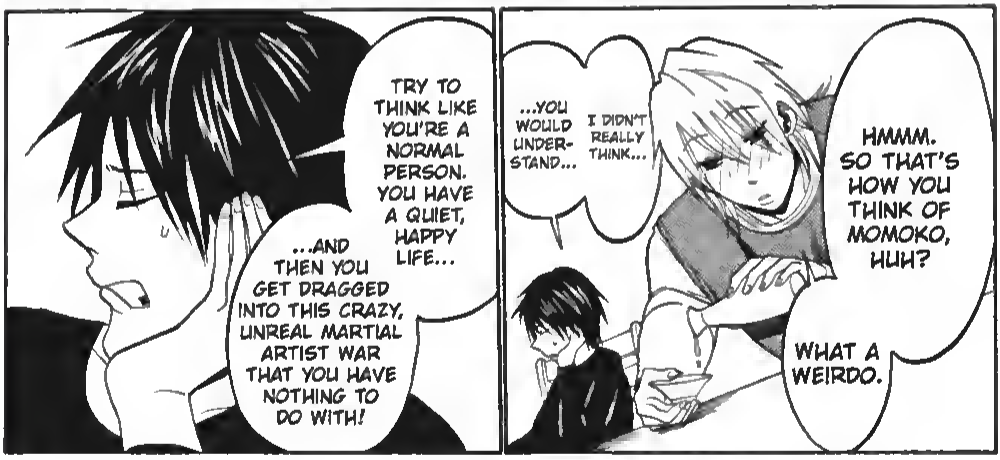

IN THAT CASE —!
ガ-!!
DAN (DAN)
...ARE THE BEST YOU'LL EVER TASTE!

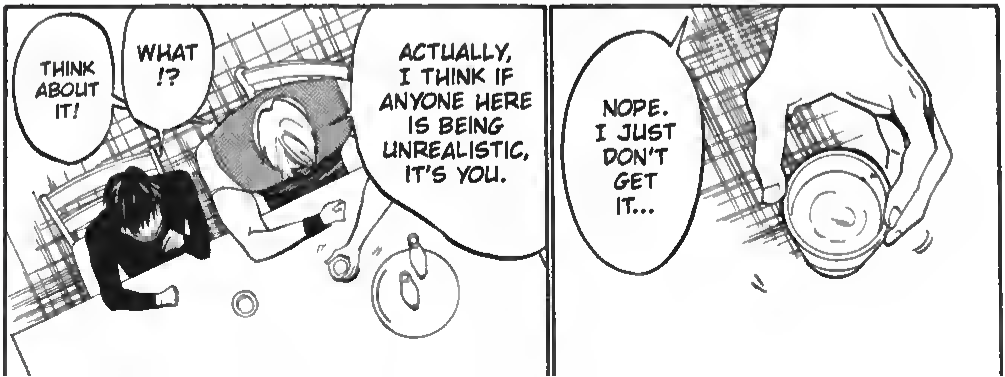


SFX: PERO (LICK) PERO

I WIIIILL!
YOU JUST RELAX AND ENJOY YOUR-SELVES.
ほか
HOKA (PUFF)
ほか
HOKA
YOU SHOULDN'T BE DRINKING, MINOR...
MOMOKO'S SUCH A LEET SWITTLE DARLING!
AWW, SHE'S SO CUTE!
ヒック
HIKKU
HIKKU CHICO
ビク
BIKU (TWITCH)
...I CAN FEEL THE HATE RISIN' AGAIN...
ヒック
HIKKU
...Y'R SUCH A LUCKY PUNK, KNOW THAT...?
GOD DANGIT ...
ヒック
HIKKU
MAAAAN, I CAN'T B'LEEVE YOU GET TA LIVE LIKE THIS EVERY DAY...

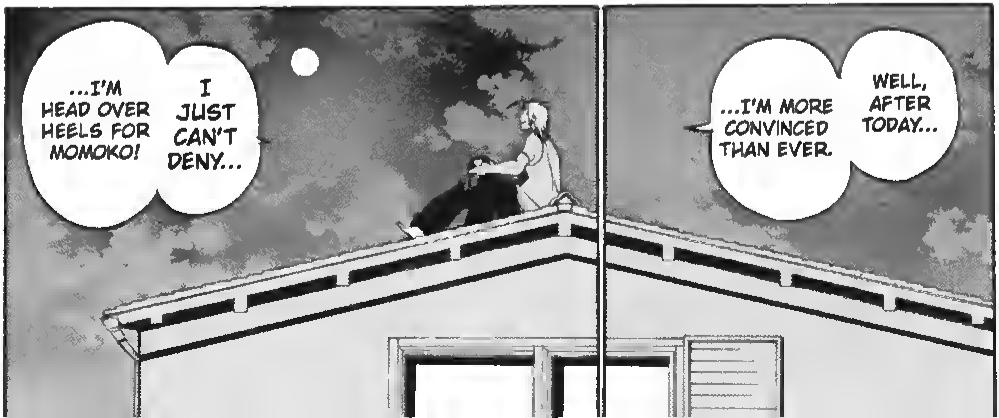
IT'S THE WORST THING THAT'S EVER HAPPENED TO ME.
.....
...MY LIFE'S BEEN ONE NONSTOP BLUR OF ASSASSINS.
YOU THINK I'M LUCKY? HAH.
EVER SINCE SHE SHOWED UP AND ANNOUNCED HERSELF AS MY FIANCÉE...


TRY TO THINK LIKE YOU'RE A NORMAL PERSON. YOU HAVE A QUIET, HAPPY LIFE...
...AND THEN YOU GET DRAGGED INTO THIS CRAZY, UNREAL MARTIAL ARTIST WAR THAT YOU HAVE NOTHING TO DO WITH!
...YOU WOULD UNDER-STAND...
I DIDN'T REALLY THINK...
HMMM. SO THAT'S HOW YOU THINK OF MOMOKO, HUH?
WHAT A WEIRDO.

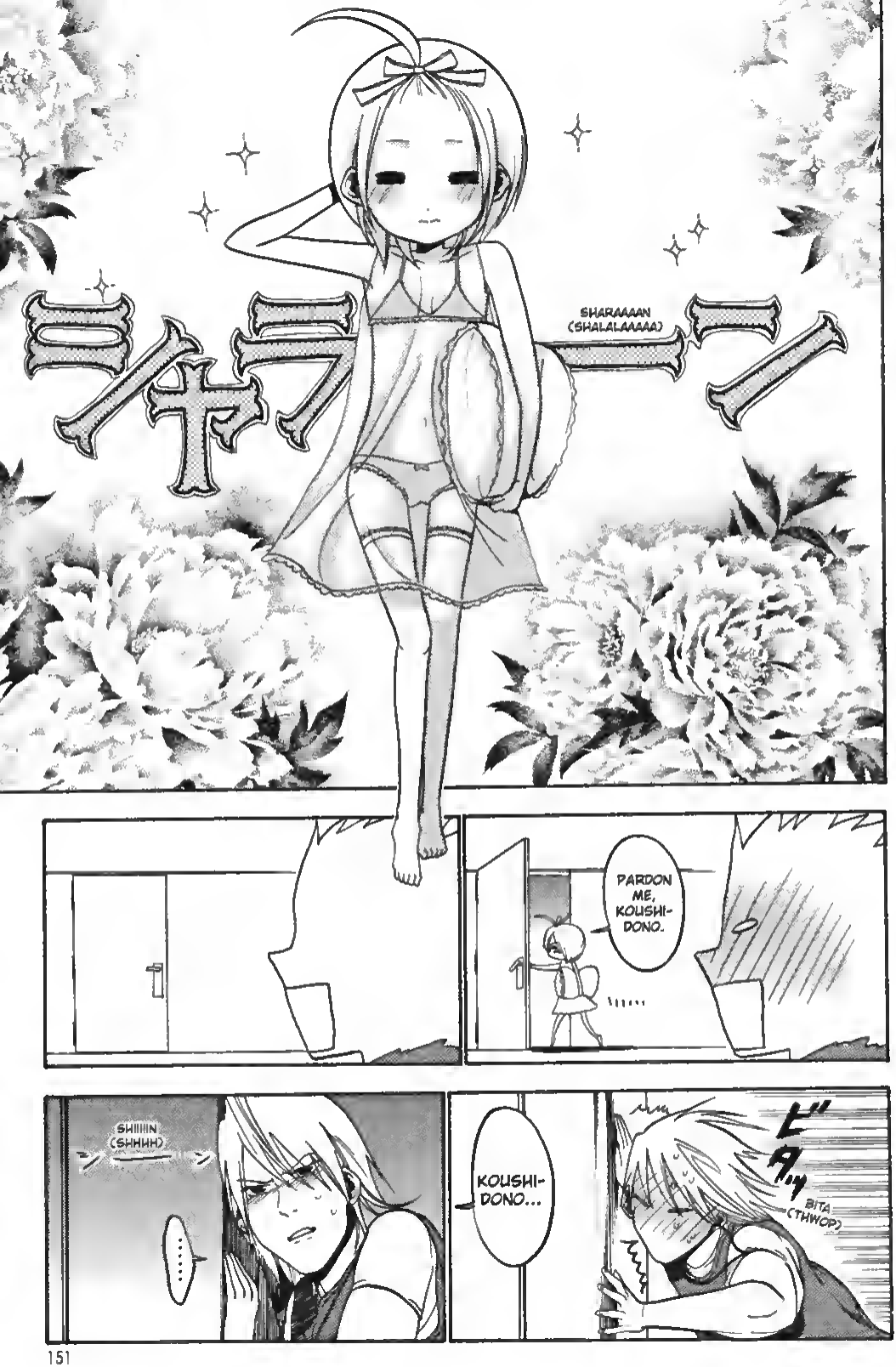

THINK ABOUT IT!
WHAT!?
ACTUALLY, I THINK IF ANYONE HERE IS BEING UNREALISTIC, IT'S YOU.
NOPE. I JUST DON'T GET IT...

THESE GUYS ARE REALLY COMIN' FOR YOU AND REALLY TRYIN' TO KILL YOU, RIGHT?
OBVIOUSLY IT *DOES* HAVE SOMETHING TO DO WITH YOU.
SO WHY ARE YOU SO HUNG UP ON NOT DOIN' ANY MARTIAL ARTS?
YOU SHOULD! YOU SHOULD DEFEND YOURSELF.

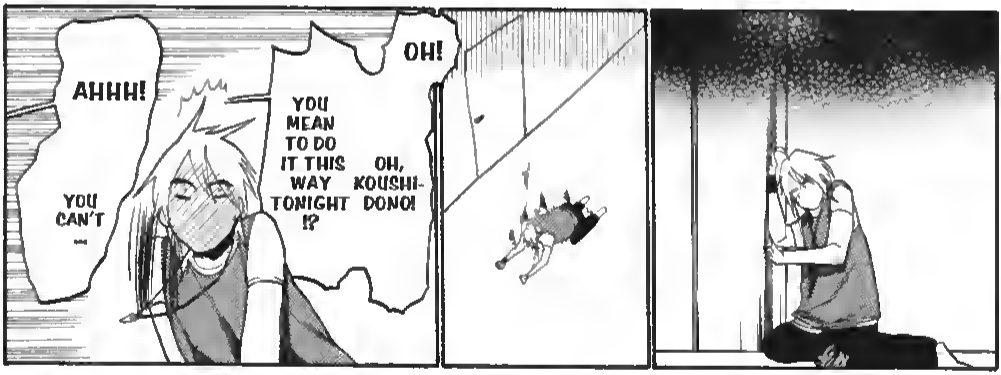
.....
WHY ...
...WHY DON'T I...?
SO WHY DON'T YOU?
I'M RIGHT HERE, MOMOKO!
YES, I'M STILL DRINKING!
AHHHH!
.....
.....


...I'M HEAD OVER HEELS FOR MOMOKO!
I JUST CAN'T DENY...
...I'M MORE CONVINCED THAN EVER.
WELL, AFTER TODAY...

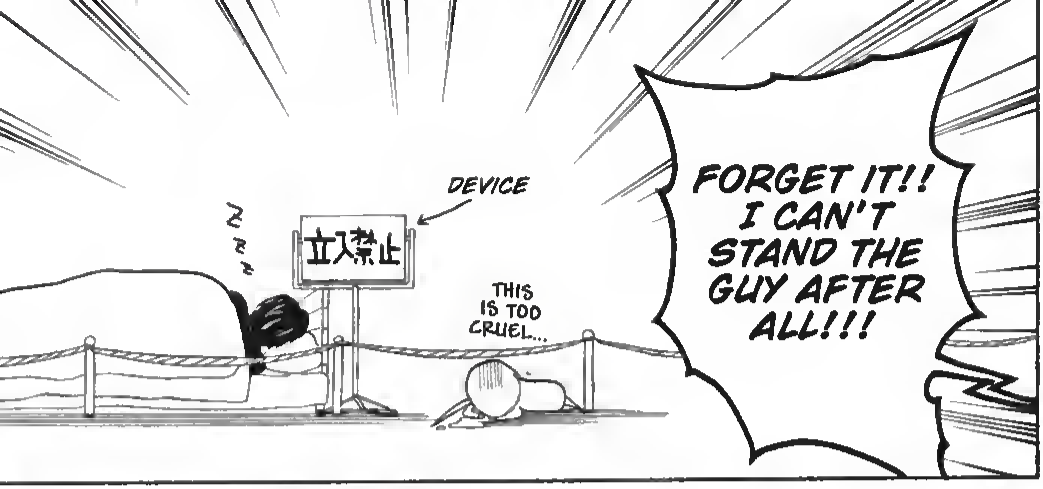
...SHE'S HIS NOW.
BUT...
...SHE CAN'T HELP BUT TURN MY WAY...!
A MAN SO GREAT...
I LOST TO INUZUKA WHEN WE DUELED...
...BUT SOMEDAY, I'M GONNA BE A BETTER MAN THAN HE IS...!
BUT UNTIL THEN...SHE MIGHT AS WELL BELONG TO HIM...


SHARAAAAN
(SHALALAAAAA)
PARDON ME, KOUSHI-DONO.
.....
SHIIIIN
(SHHHH)
.....
KOUSHI-DONO...
BITA
(THWOP)

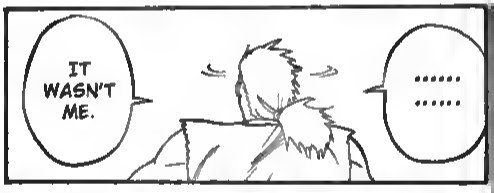
MAY I SHARE YOUR BED TONIGHT?

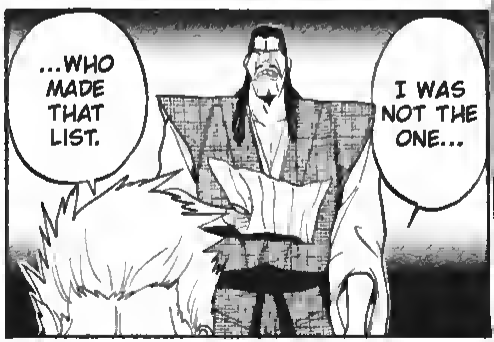

AHHH!
YOU CAN'T ...
OH!
YOU MEAN TO DO IT THIS WAY TONIGHT !?
OH, KOUSHI-DONO!

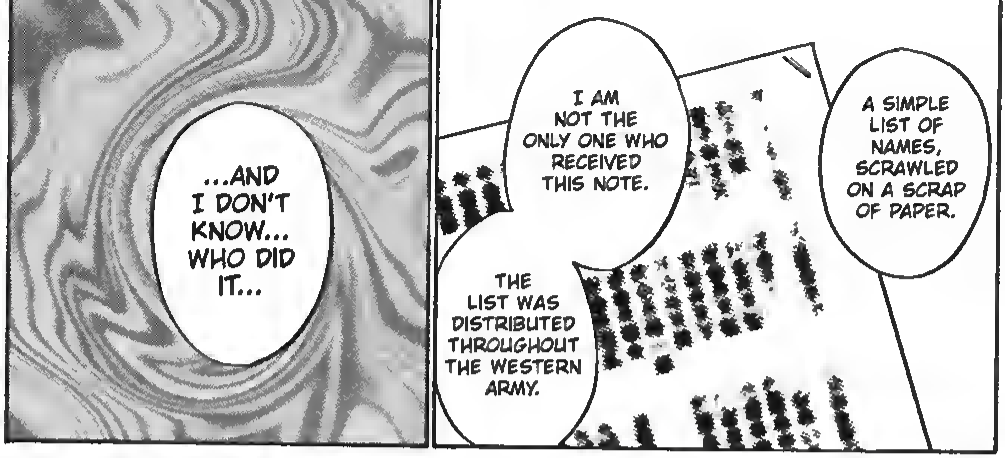
NOOOOOO
YOU JUST CAN'T ...
YOU CAN'T USE THOSE DEVICES THIS TIME!!
ふぃち BUCHI
ふぃち BUCHI
BUCHI (SNAP)
ふぃち

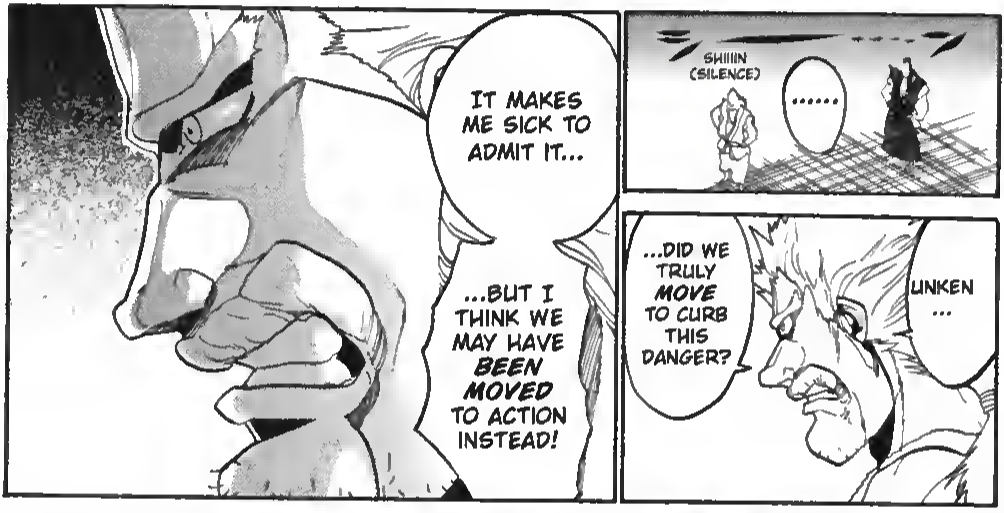


SIGN: NO TRESPASSING





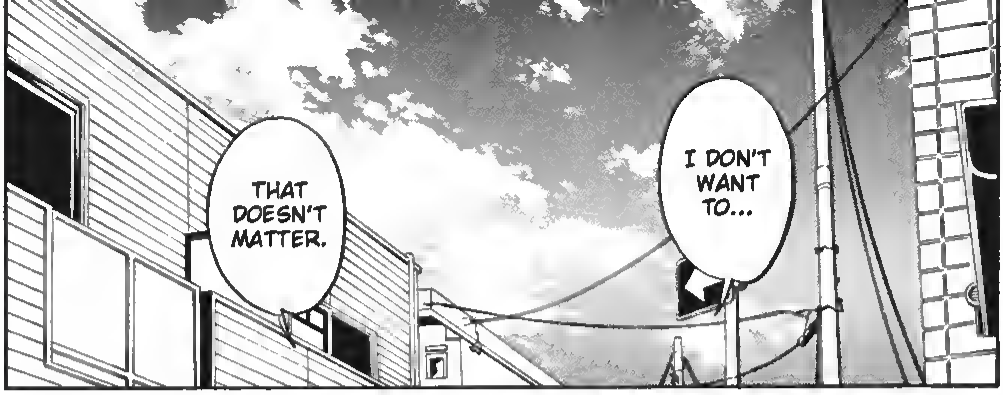

...AND I DON'T KNOW... WHO DID IT...
I AM NOT THE ONLY ONE WHO RECEIVED THIS NOTE.
A SIMPLE LIST OF NAMES, SCRAWLED ON A SCRAP OF PAPER.
THE LIST WAS DISTRIBUTED THROUGHOUT THE WESTERN ARMY.


IT MAKES ME SICK TO ADMIT IT...
...BUT I THINK WE MAY HAVE BEEN MOVED TO ACTION INSTEAD!
SHIIIN (SILENCE)
.....
...DID WE TRULY MOVE TO CURB THIS DANGER?
UNKEN ...

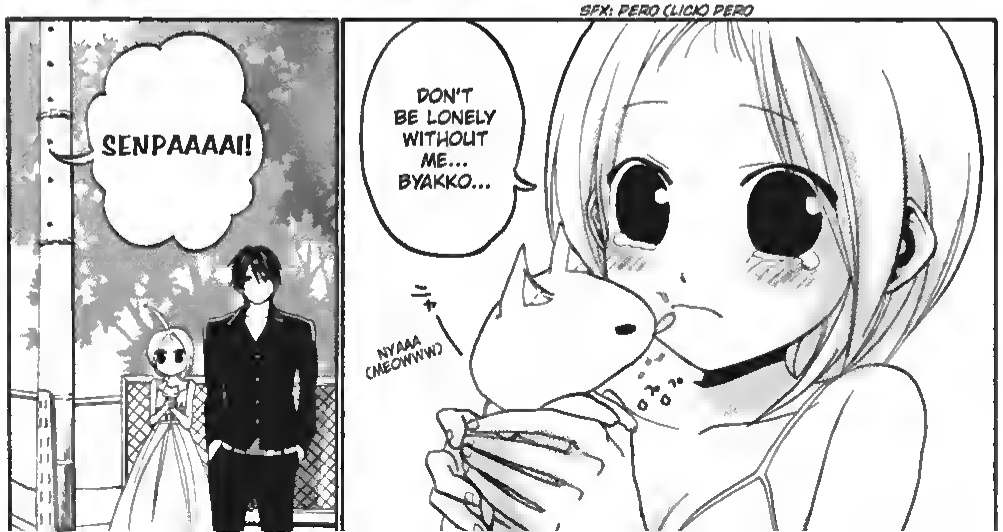
...THAN A MERE TIGER HUNT.
SOMEONE IS TOYING WITH US... FROM SOMEWHERE!
...THIS IS SOMETHING FAR MORE TROUBLING AND SINISTER ...
MY INSTINCT TELLS ME...

CHAPTER 20. RETURN OF THE TIGER – END

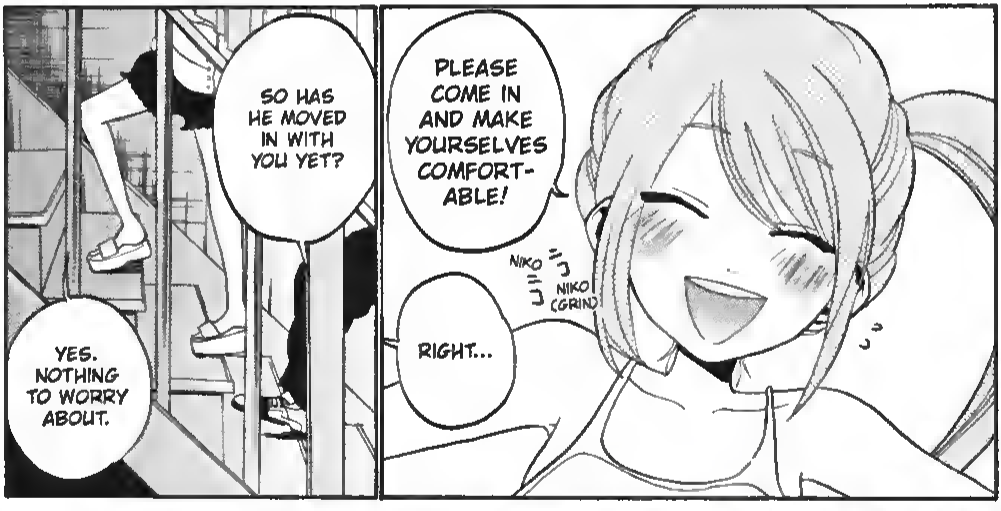
21. LET NOTHING HAPPEN

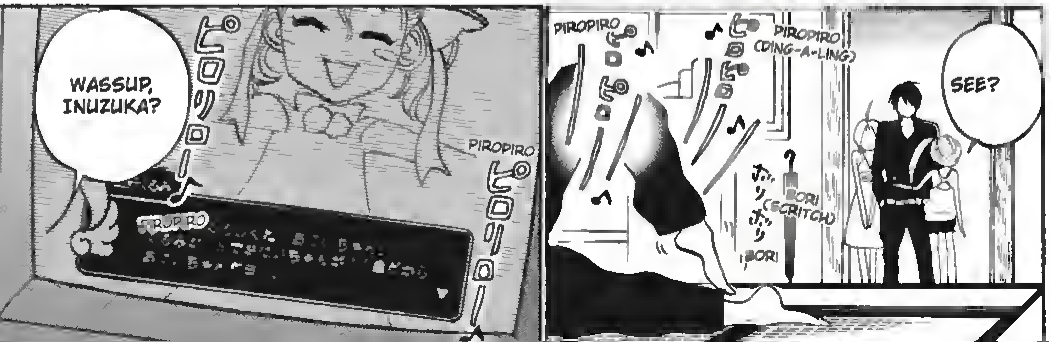

I DON'T WANT TO...
THAT DOESN'T MATTER.

IT'S COMMON SENSE. YOU HAVE TO RETURN A PET TO ITS RIGHTFUL OWNER.
AWW...

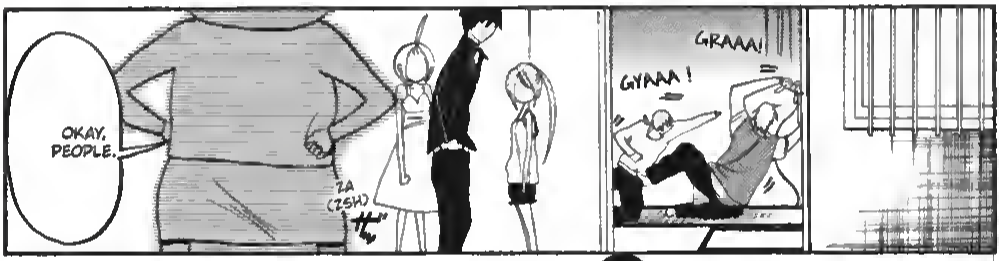

SFX: PERO (LICK) PERO
SENPAAAAI!
DON'T BE LONELY WITHOUT ME... BYAKKO...
NYAAA (MEOWWW)

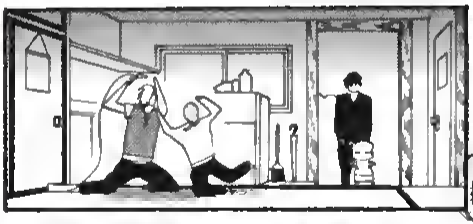
OVER HERE!


SO HAS HE MOVED IN WITH YOU YET?
YES. NOTHING TO WORRY ABOUT.
PLEASE COME IN AND MAKE YOURSELVES COMFORT-ABLE!
NIKO NIKO (GRIN)
RIGHT...


WASSUP, INUZUKA?
PIROPIRO
PIROPIRO
PIROPIRO (DING-A-LING)
SEE?
BORI (SCRITCH)
BORI

...
HE'S FITTING RIGHT IN.
HISS!
COME ON, ASS! PAY ATTENTION TO THE CUTSCENE!
ONII-CHAN!
COME ON IN!
GORO (PURR)
GORO

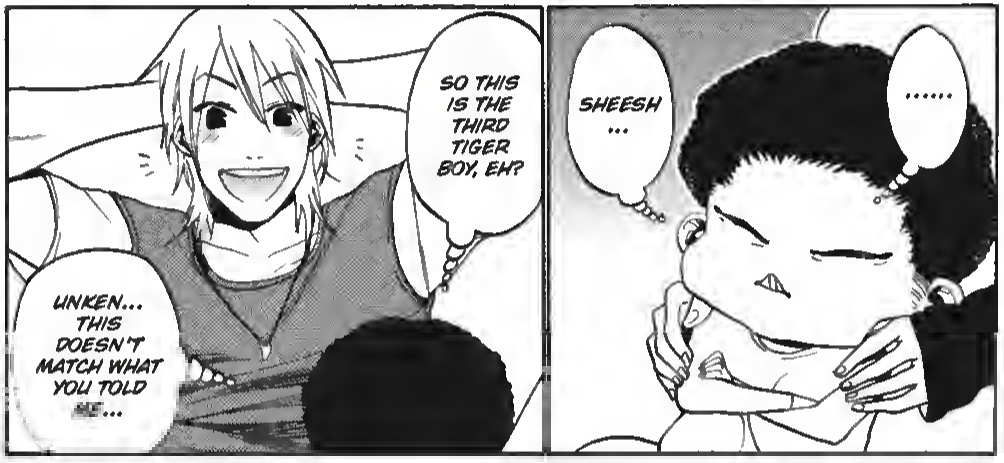

OKAY, PEOPLE.
ZA (ZSH)
GYAAA!
GRAAA!



I'VE HEARD ENOUGH NOISE OUTTA YOU FOR ONE DAY...

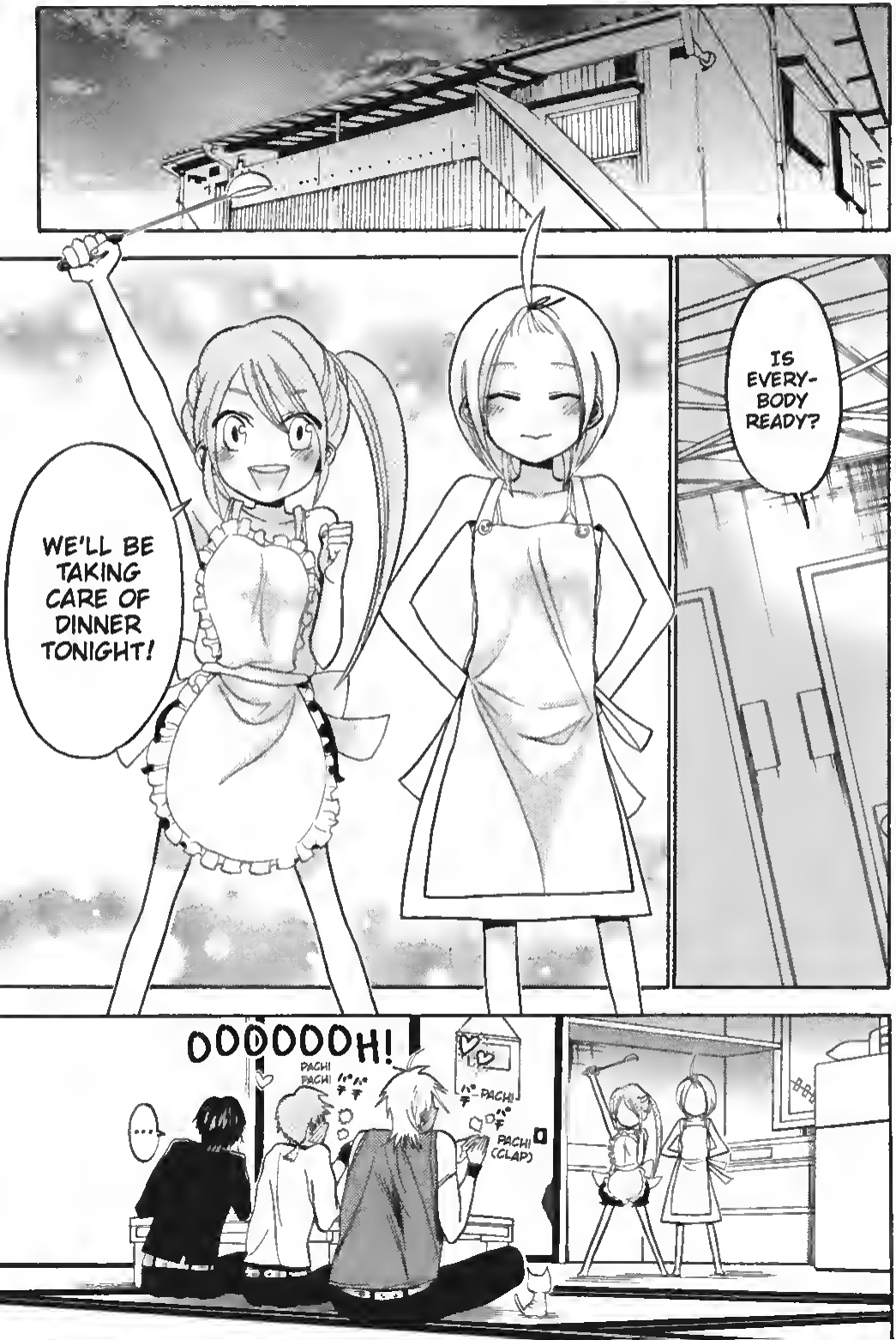
BAAAAN (BOOOM)

OH, SHE'S NOT SO BAD, AS LONG AS YOU PAY THE RENT!
HA HA HA
THAT'S OUR LAND-LADY.
SH-SHE'S SCARY ...
BISHI (SALUTE) ビシッ


SO THIS IS THE THIRD TIGER BOY, EH?
UNKEN... THIS DOESN'T MATCH WHAT YOU TOLD ME...
SHEESH ...
.....

HE LOOKS LIKE A NORMAL BOY TO ME...
THOSE BRATS HAVE DANGEROUS, FERAL EYES... FULL OF MALICE...!
.....
.....
NNH..

I CAN'T STAND THE THOUGHT OF THEM CHANGING...
THEY'RE SUCH NORMAL KIDS...
...SHEDDING BLOOD...
...IF ONLY...
...IF ONLY THIS WOULD ALL RESOLVE ITSELF PEACE-FULLY...


WE'LL BE TAKING CARE OF DINNER TONIGHT!
IS EVERY-BODY READY?
OOOOOOH!
PACHI PACHI
PACHI
PACHI (CLAP)
....

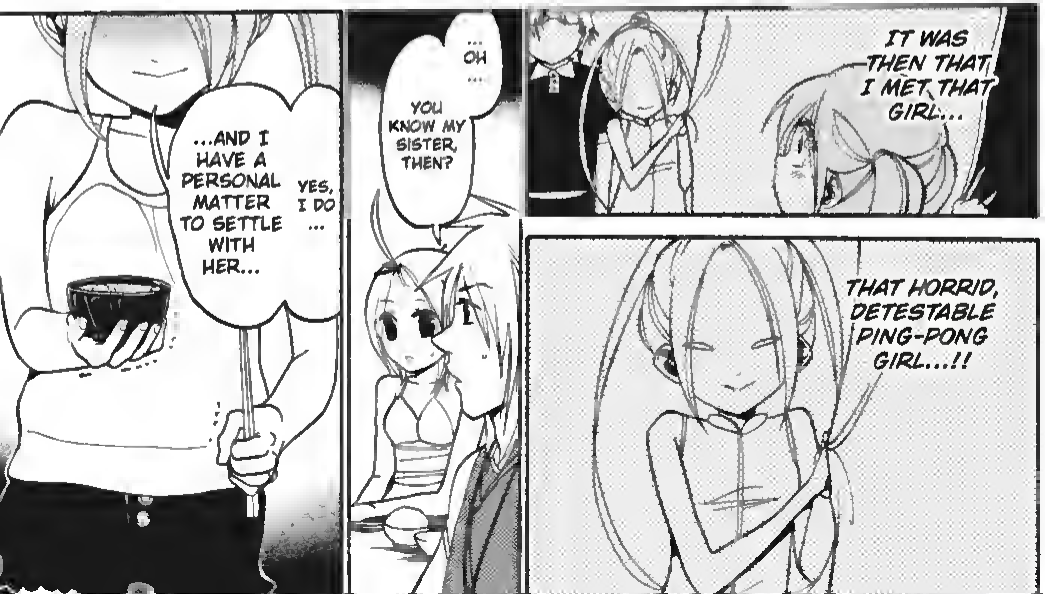
MUKI (PEEL)
むき
MUKI
むき
MUKI
むき
MUKI
むき
GIKU (GERK)
ぎくっ
HA HA HA.
YOU'LL GET MUCH BETTER ONCE YOU HAVE SOMEONE TO COOK FOR.
I-I HAVE HAD LOTS OF PRACTICE COOKING, AS WIFE TRAINING... YOU KNOW...
CHIRA
ちら
CHIRA (PEEK)
ちら
...

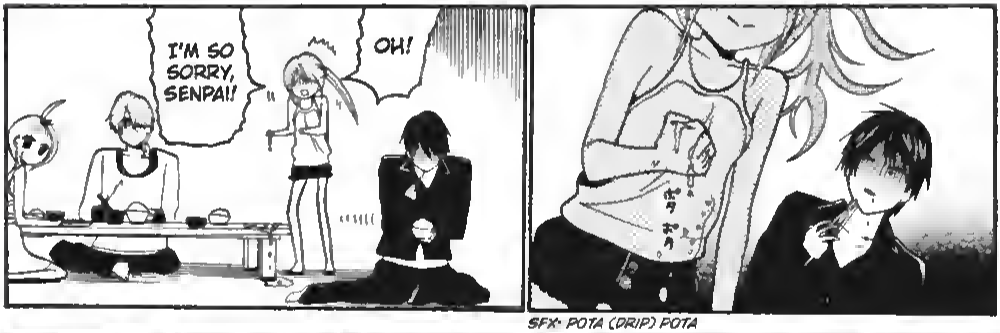
SHUT YOUR MOUTH! I WOULD NOT HOLD SUCH LOW FEELINGS TOWARD MY DEAR NEE-SAN!!
WHA—!?
I-LIKE—!?
WHAT, YOU LIKE THAT OTHER CHICK?
TELL ME ABOUT IT!
WOW, I LOVE A GIRL IN AN APRON.
.....
あわ AWA (FLUSTER) あわ AWA
... AND ...
... AND ...
THEY WOULD BE MORE... DIGNIFIED AND... NOBLE, AND...
IT'S LIKE A MIDDLE SCHOOL FIELD TRIP.
WHAT AM I WATCH-ING?
... THEY'RE ALMOST ...
BUT, YOU KNOW, WHEN THEY'RE IN AN EVERYDAY SETTING...

...TEENAGERS...
PERFECTLY NORMAL...
BY THE WAY, ONII—
...I MEAN, SENPAI!

I'VE HEARD THE STORIES.
IT'S THE KOGANEI SIBLINGS, ISN'T IT?
I TAKE IT ALL BACK...
ABOUT THE ASSAS-SINS...
BU (BFF) ッ

THERE WAS A TIME WHEN THE KOGANEI CLAN'S FORMER HEAD VISITED OUR HOME IN MIYAMOTO VILLAGE...
THAT'D BE DAD.
DO YOU KNOW THEM, NEE-SAN?
YES. THE KOGANEIS ARE ALSO MEMBERS OF THE WESTERN ARMY.


...AND I HAVE A PERSONAL MATTER TO SETTLE WITH HER...
YES, I DO ...
... OH ...
YOU KNOW MY SISTER, THEN?
IT WAS THEN THAT I MET THAT GIRL...
THAT HORRID, DETESTABLE PING-PONG GIRL...!!

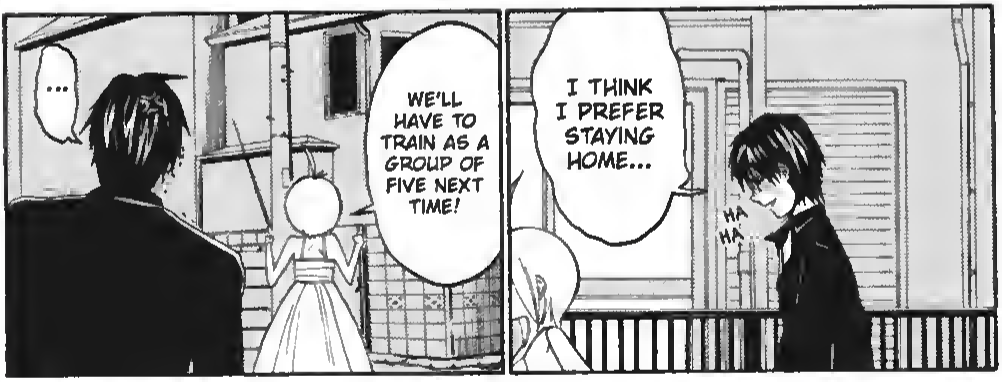


SFX: POTA (DRIP) POTA

I, IROHA MIYA-MOTO ...
...PLEDGE TO RISK MY LIFE FOR YOU IN BATTLE, SENPAI!
I'M WITH HER.
ZA (ZSH)
M- ME TOO!
ZA
I'VE GOT YOUR BACK, PAL!
AND I, OF COURSE ...
...WOULD GIVE MY LIFE TO SAVE YOURS, KOUSHI-DONO...!
ZA

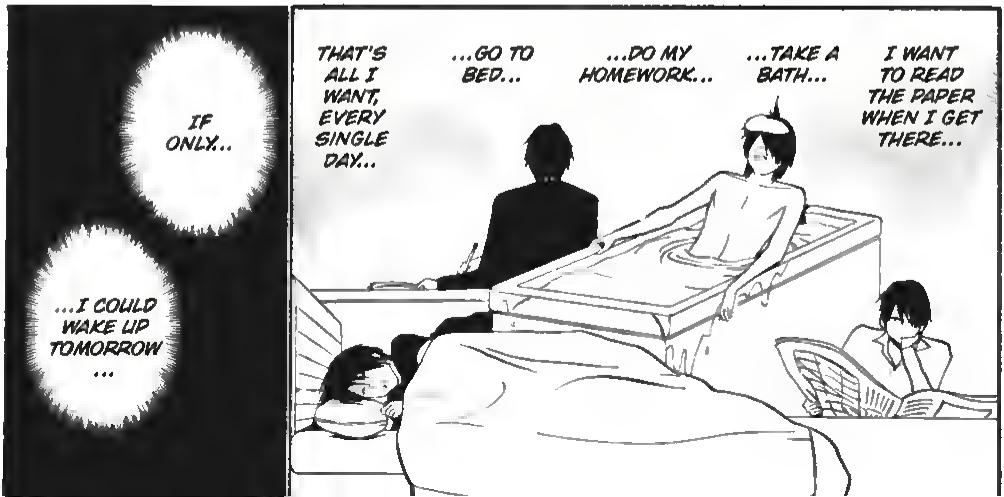
TOGETHER WE CAN STOP THE KOGANEI SIBLINGS! WITH THE UNITED POWER OF FIVE...
1
2
3
4
5
...SURELY WE CAN EMERGE VICTORIOUS IN THE FIGHT AHEAD!!!
.....
.....

SFX: TEKU (TROK) TEKU



MORE ASSASSINS.
WHEN WILL THIS END?
ALL I WANT IS TO LIVE IN PEACE...
I CAN'T TAKE IT...

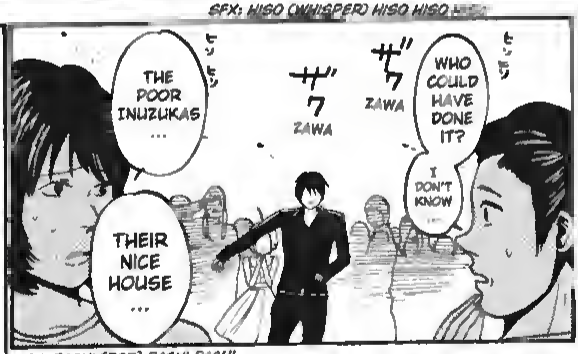
I WANT TO GO HOME...

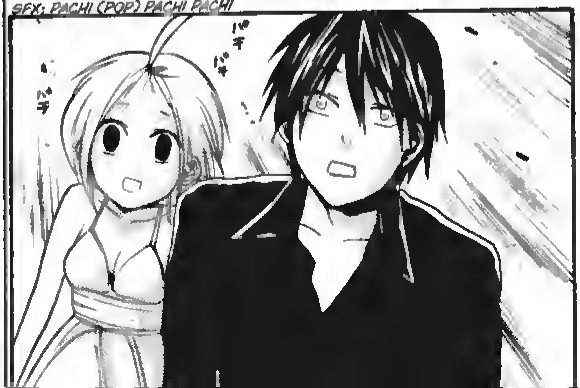

IF ONLY..
...I COULD WAKE UP TOMORROW ...
THAT'S ALL I WANT, EVERY SINGLE DAY...
...GO TO BED...
...DO MY HOMEWORK...
...TAKE A BATH...
I WANT TO READ THE PAPER WHEN I GET THERE...

ZAWA
ZAWA (MURMUR)
HUH?
...TO A WORLD WHERE NOTHING EVER HAPPENED!!

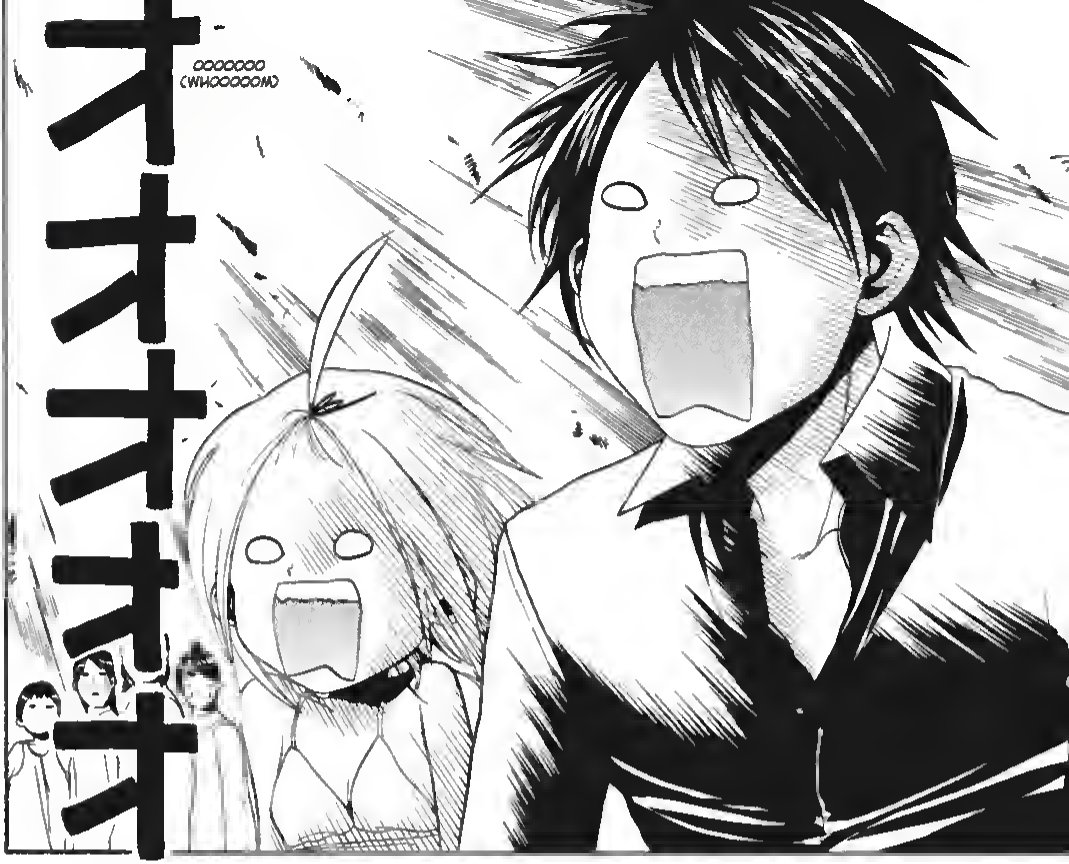
ZAWA
ZAWA
THERE'S A BIG CROWD...
DOES IT SEEM BRIGHT TO YOU UP AHEAD?

GOOOO (FWOOOM)
BAKI (CRAKK)
BAKI


THE POOR INUZUKAS ...
THEIR NICE HOUSE ...
ZAWA
ZAWA
WHO COULD HAVE DONE IT?
I DON'T KNOW ...


SFX: PACHI (POP) PACHI PACHI

GOOOO
(FWOOOM)



CHAPTER 21: LET NOTHING HAPPEN – END

ゴオオ
GOOOO

KOSO (SCUTTLE)
KOSO

DID YOU SET THIS COWARDLY BLAZE?
WAS IT YOU?
ZA (ZSHH)

WHY...?

ギロ
GIRO (GLARE)
YOU LITTLE RATS ...!!

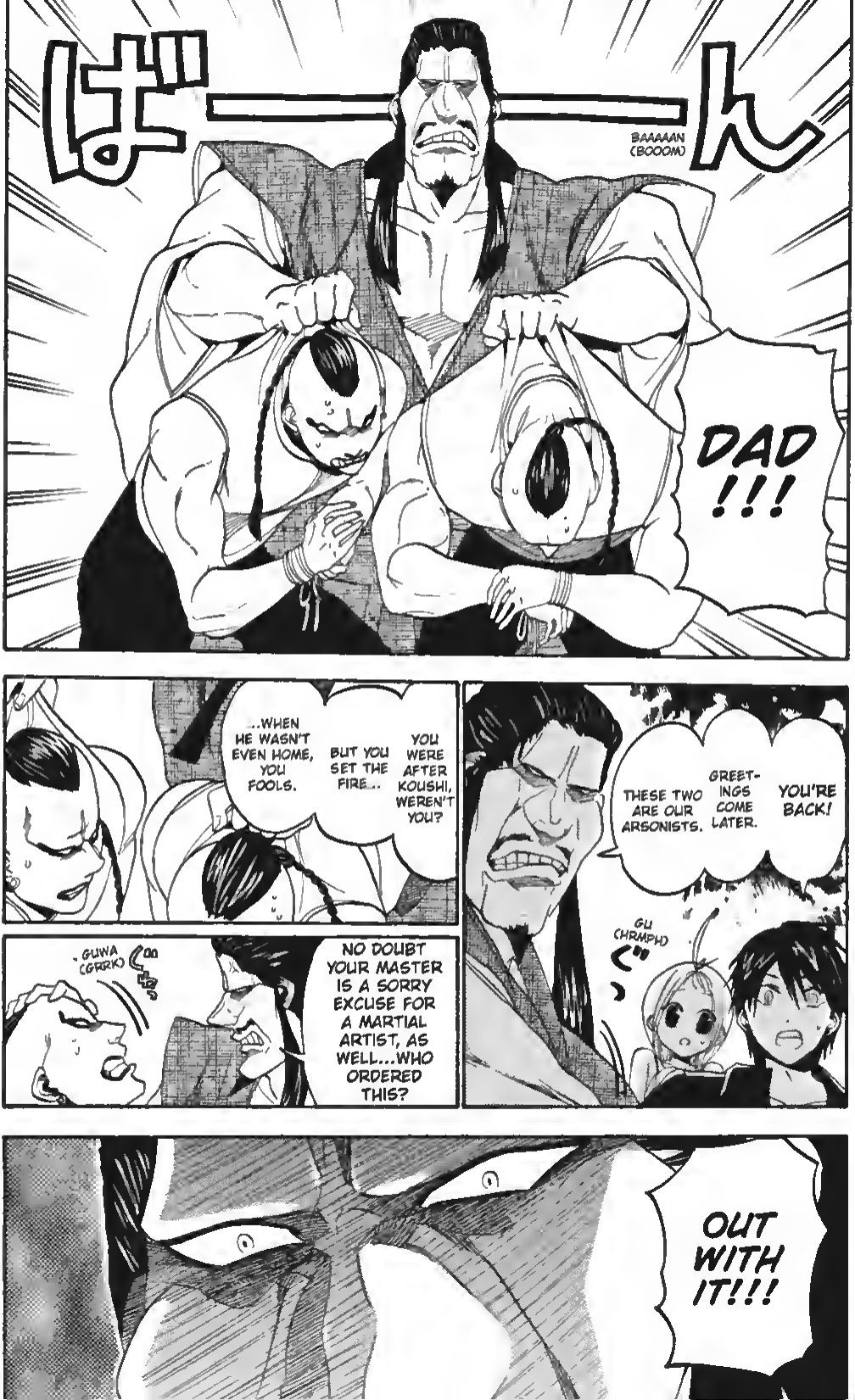
22. FATHER'S WORDS

ほか
HOKA
(PUFF)
ほか
HOKA

AH... OHHH...
BORO (CRUMBLE)
BORO

WHAT COULD'VE CAUSED SUCH A TERRIBLE FIRE...?
KOUSHI-DONO...! SNAP OUT OF IT! HANG IN THERE...!
THAT RIGHT THERE... THAT WAS MY ROOM...
PURU (TREMBLE)
PURU

D-D...!
D...
OH!
DOSA (THWOMP)
IT WAS THE WORK OF THESE SLUGS.


ばーーーん
BAAAAAN (BOOOM)
DAD!!!
YOU'RE BACK!
GREETINGS COME LATER.
THESE TWO ARE OUR ARSONISTS.
GU (HRMPH)
YOU WERE AFTER KOUSHI, WEREN'T YOU?
BUT YOU SET THE FIRE...
...WHEN HE WASN'T EVEN HOME, YOU FOOLS.
NO DOUBT YOUR MASTER IS A SORRY EXCUSE FOR A MARTIAL ARTIST, AS WELL...WHO ORDERED THIS?
GUWA (GRRK)
OUT WITH IT!!!

GOOOOO (FWOOOOM)
.....
ZOOOOO (CHILL)
!!
BA (SHWAP)
!?
BA (LEAP)
KOUSHI-DONO!!!

SFX: ZOOOOO (ZRRRR)

DODODODO
DNNNNNNNN
I'M AFRAID I CAN'T LET THAT ONE PASS.
TH-
THERE ARE A LOT OF THEM!
!KEEEEE
THERE YOU ARE.

BUTSU (MUTTER)
BUTSU
BUTSU
BUTSU
BY THE ELEMENT OF FIRE YOU SHALL BURST.
BY THE ELEMENT OF FIRE YOU SHALL BURST.
SU
SU
SU
SU
SU (SHH)
BY THE ELEMENT OF FIRE YOU SHALL BURST.
YOU SHALL BURST
YOU SHALL BURST
ZOOOO (CHILLS)
...!
BAH.
YOU SHALL BURST
YOU SHALL BURST
...I ALONE ...
... STAND AL-MIGHTY !!
BOOOO (BWOOMMM)
I'VE HEARD ENOUGH ...
スゥッ! SUU (SFFF)
BA (ZWAP)
SKY ABOVE ...
...SKY BELOW ...
BA

THREE REALMS ...
...OF CORPOREAL ...
...SUFFER-ING...
オオオ
(WOMMMMMM)
...THROUGH ME...
... ALONE ...
... LIES ...
... PEACE !!
(GUAA (GRAAH)

BARI (ZWAP?)
BARI
BARI
BARI
BARI
BARI
KAAA-AAAAA!!!!
BIKAAAA (BZOWWW)

SECRET ART: SIX WORLDS TRANSCENDENTAL BINDING SHOCK!
GAAAAAHHH!
BARI (ZAP)
BAR
BARI
BARI
BARI
BARI
BIKIIII (TINNGGGG)

SFX: MISHI (CRIK) MISHI MISHI MISHI MISHI
NOT EVEN A SINGLE FINGER!
I...
I CAN'T MOVE...!

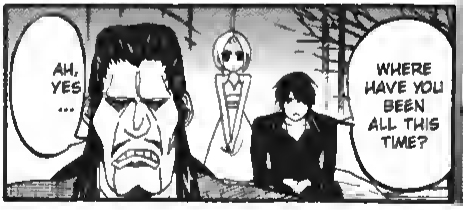
SFX: ZO (ZWUH)
...THAT MY DAD WAS THIS POWERFUL...!!
ビカーーッ
BIKAAAAAA (ZWAAAA)
BIKU (TWITCH)
H-
HOLY CRAP...
I HAD ABSOLUTELY NO IDEA...
GAAA (VOOOM)
BAH.
AMAZING...
.....

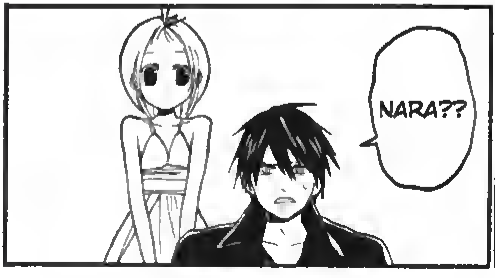
!!!
バフゥ
BAFU (FABOOM)
WE MUST AWAY!!
I'M FREE!
ばっ
BA (SWP)
!!
BLAST ...
シュウぅぅ....
SHUUUUU (FSHHHH)
GEHO
GEHO
GEHO
ゲホッ
ゲホ
ゲホ
ゲホ
GEHO
ゲホ
GEHO (KOFF)
FU (FSH)
I'VE LET THEM WRIGGLE AWAY...
シュウウウウ....
SHUUUUU

IT'S REALLY... ALL GONE...

WELL, LISTEN TO YOU.
LIFE HASN'T EXACTLY BEEN ROSES FOR US HERE.

SPARE ME YOUR TEARS.
SIGH...WHY DOES THIS ALWAYS HAPPEN TO ME...?


AH, YES ...
WHERE HAVE YOU BEEN ALL THIS TIME?

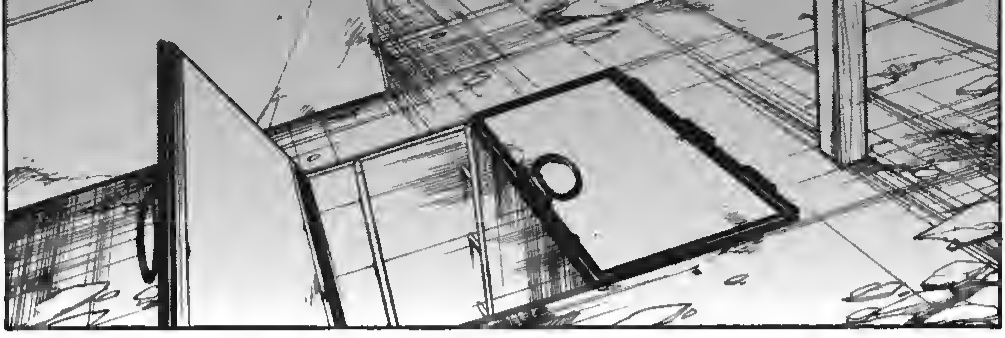

NARA??

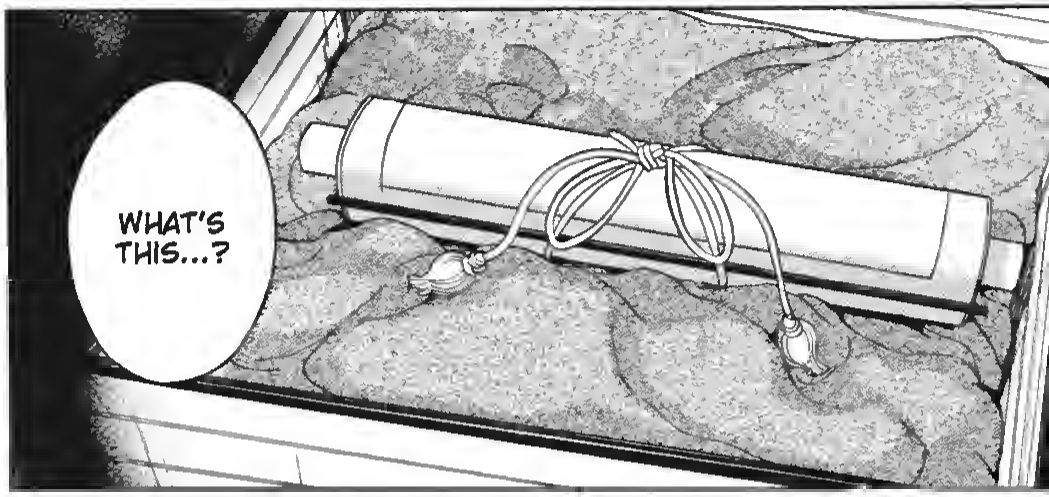
IN NARA.
.....

...THE BUDDHA OF MEDICINE AND COMMANDER OF THE TWELVE HEAVENLY GENERALS...
NARA'S HOURYUUJI TEMPLE ENSHRINES YAKUSHI NYORAI...
... NEARLY.
THE AGREEMENT WAS UNANIMOUS ...
...AND HELD A MEETING TO FORGE AN ALLIANCE OF PEACE BETWEEN OUR FRACTURED SIDES...
THE LEADERS OF THE TWELVE CLANS GATHERED THERE...
ONLY THE KOGANEI CLAN FAILED TO MAKE AN APPEAR-ANCE...
....
ZO (CHILL)
...THE TIGERS WILL BARE THEIR FANGS AGAIN SOON.
THIS FIRE WILL HAVE BEEN THEIR WORK.
AND THERE IS REASON TO BELIEVE ...

I WILL HAVE TO LEAVE AGAIN AT ONCE.
...I SHOULD BE SAFE FROM—
.....
W-WELL, OKAY... BUT NOW THAT DAD IS BACK...
...WITH THOSE INSANE POWERS AT HIS DISPOSAL ...
I HAVE OTHER CONCERNS ASIDE FROM THE TIGERS.
WHA... N-NO, DAD! WAIT!
WHAT!?
GYO (GACK)
IRRE-SPON-SIBLE?
.....
THIS IS IRRESPON-SIBLE!

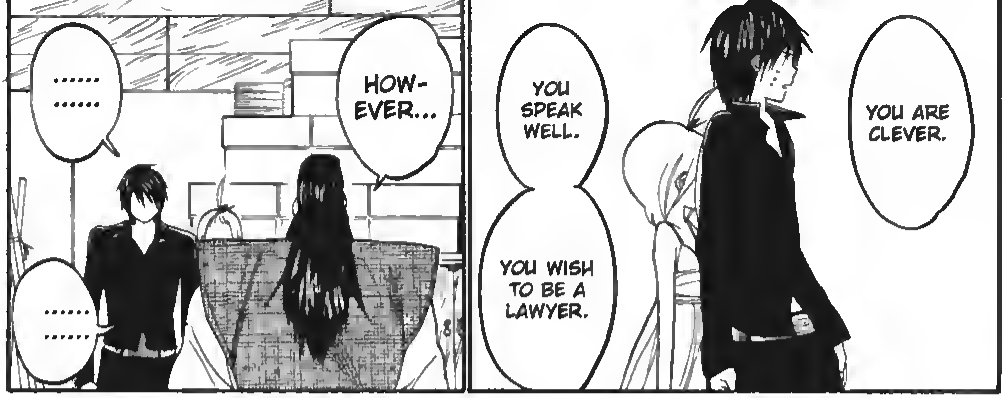
IT'S ALL THIS... MARTIAL ARTS BUSINESS AND WHATNOT...
...YOUR STRATEGIC ALLIANCE ...
STARTED WITH ME?
MY LIFE IS IN DANGER!
AND IT ALL STARTED WITH YOU.
I DON'T WANT TO GET KILLED OVER SOMETHING LIKE THAT!
ALL THAT STUFF CAME FROM YOU!
...AND THIS ENGAGE-MENT YOU SET ME UP WITH ...
?
JUST COME WITH ME!
.....
HUH?
KOU-SHI ...
WHAT?
COME.




WHAT'S THIS...?

...OF BASARA FUDOU SHINGAN-RYUU MARTIAL ARTS.
THIS SCROLL CONTAINS THE SECRET ARTS...

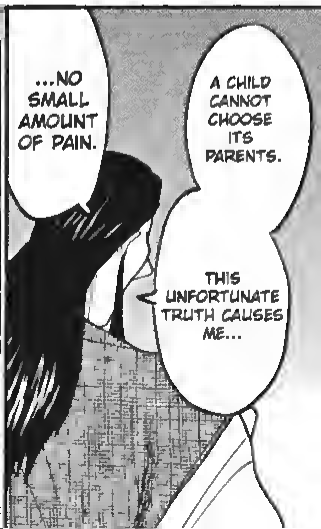
ぽかん
POKAN (DUHH)
...!?
MASTER THEM.
KOU-SHI.
YOU WANT ME TO LEARN MARTIAL ARTS? NO WAY, NUH-UH, I'M—
NO! WAIT A MIN-UTE!
HUHI?
H-
HOLD YOUR TONGUE.


.....
.....
HOW-EVER...
.....
.....
YOU SPEAK WELL.
YOU WISH TO BE A LAWYER.
YOU ARE CLEVER.

!
ムカ
MUKAA (GRRR)

...YOU CANNOT USE THAT AS AN EXCUSE.

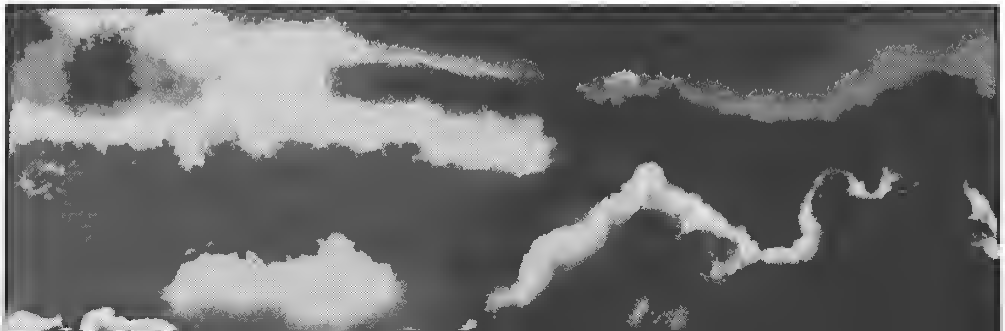
YOU ARE STILL MY SON!!
HOW-EVER!
KI (KRRR)
DON (WHAM)


...NO SMALL AMOUNT OF PAIN.
A CHILD CANNOT CHOOSE ITS PARENTS.
THIS UNFORTUNATE TRUTH CAUSES ME...

AND IF YOU DON'T WANT TO LOSE IT...
THAT IS YOUR LOT IN LIFE.
MOVE.
STRUG-GLE.
BE VIGI-LANT !!
WHY DO YOU NOT SEEK THE MEANS TO PROTECT YOURSELF !!?

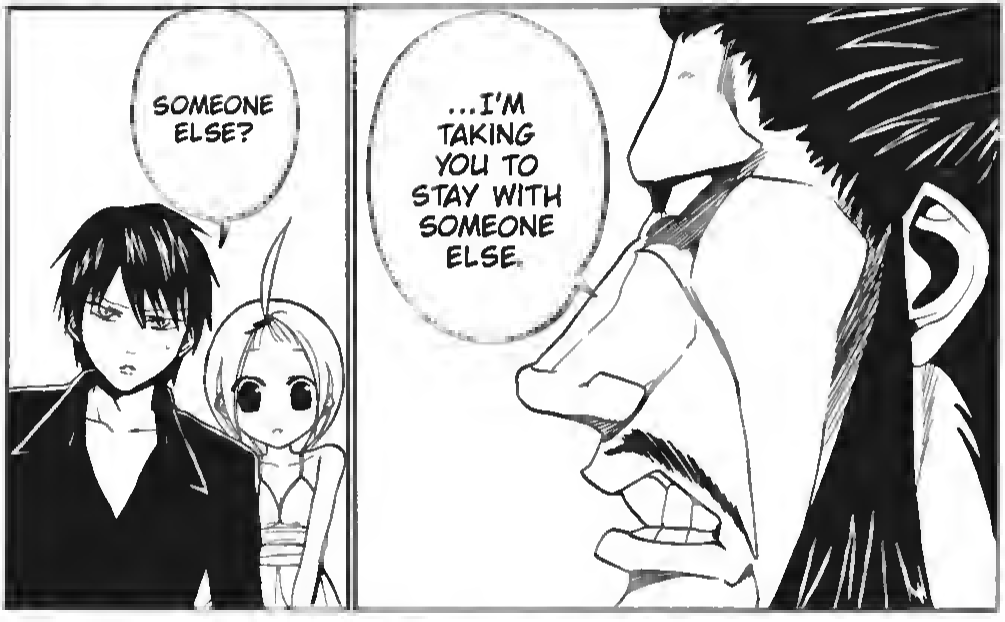
IT IS YOU WHO IS IRRESPON-SIBLE...
...KOUSHI.

.....
.....



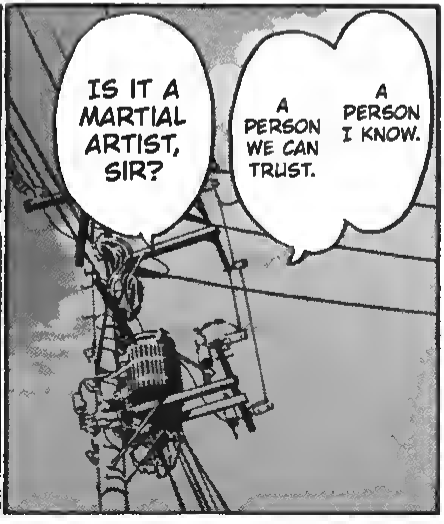
IT IS YOU WHO IS IRRESPONSIBLE!
...STRAIGHT OUTTA THE BLUE...
I DON'T GET WHAT HE EXPECTS ME TO DO, JUST SLAPPING THIS INTO MY HAND...
.....
.....
F-
FATHER, WHERE ARE WE HEADED?
.....
...IT'S TOTALLY INSANE...

WELL, AS THE HOUSE IS GONE NOW...
AH, YES...

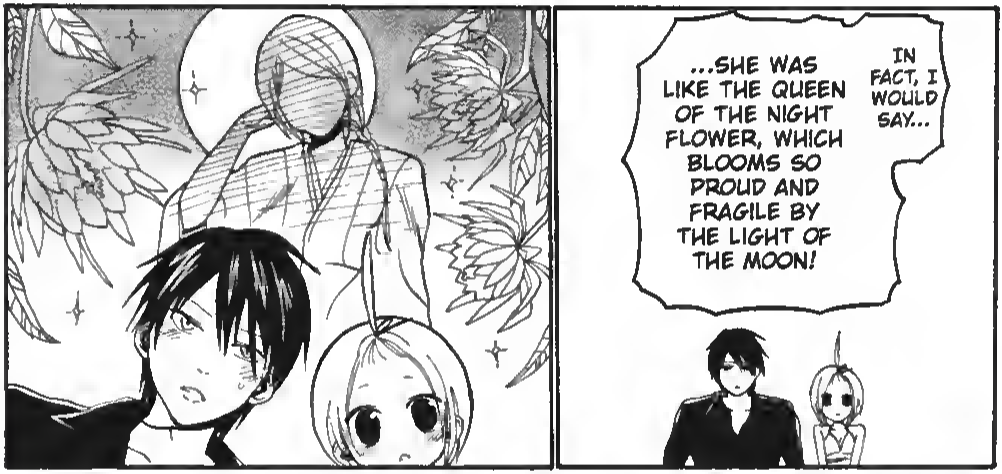

SOMEONE ELSE?
...I'M TAKING YOU TO STAY WITH SOMEONE ELSE.

...THAT'S NOT ENTIRELY CORRECT.
YES.
WELL, TO BE PRECISE ...

SHE IS A WOMAN I KNEW WELL IN MY YOUNGER DAYS.
?


IS IT A MARTIAL ARTIST, SIR?
A PERSON WE CAN TRUST.
A PERSON I KNOW.

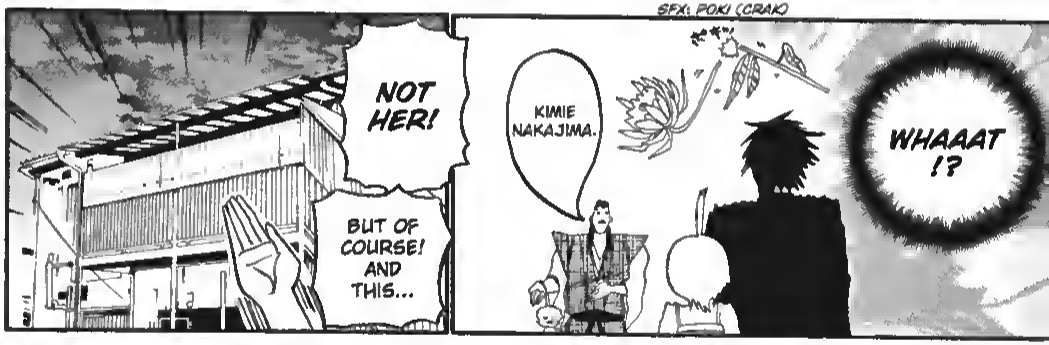
WARM-HEARTED... GENTLE...
...SOME-TIMES FIERCE...
...BUT ALWAYS SUPPORTIVE IN WAYS YOU COULDN'T SEE.


IN FACT, I WOULD SAY...
...SHE WAS LIKE THE QUEEN OF THE NIGHT FLOWER, WHICH BLOOMS SO PROUD AND FRAGILE BY THE LIGHT OF THE MOON!

WHA—
IT CAN'T BE!!

AND HERE WE ARE!

HERE SHE IS!
YES!
UNKEN!



CHAPTER 22. FATHER'S WORDS – END / SUMOMOMO MOMOMO 3 END

TRANSLATION NOTES

Sumomomo Momomo is part of a well-known Japanese tongue twister which reads, "Sumomo mo momo mo momo no uchi," and roughly means,"Plums and peaches are part of the peach family."

Page 66
Toukaidou Line: A *shinkansen* (bullet train) line, the first of its kind, that runs from Tokyo to Osaka in Western Japan.

Page 112
Byakko: Also called the "White Tiger," Byakko is the Japanese name for one of the four principal Chinese constellations and its accompanying mythical god. The other three are Suzaku (Crimson Bird), Seiryuu (Blue Dragon), and Genbu (Black Tortoise).

Page 187
Sky above, sky below, I alone stand almighty, three realms of corporeal suffering, through me alone lies peace: This huge mouthful of a special attack name is a quote attributed to the Buddha in certain Buddhist texts. The Three Realms are the three worlds of Buddhist cosmology in which all creatures dwell. This quote (or at least the first part) has taken on a more secular meaning in contemporary Japanese, where it can refer to self-absorption and vainglory. In general, however, Unken Inuzuka's use of these quotes for his attacks is essentially for show. It's a bit like calling an imperious religious quotes for "biblical" effect, just in a traditional Japanese way.

Page 190
Six Worlds: The six different worlds in the afterlife according to Buddhism.

WHY CONTINUE TO FIGHT...
I CANNOT ALLOW THIS!!
...THROUGH PAIN, LOSS, AND SETBACKS...!?
I WILL PROTECT HIM...
FOR VENGEANCE? FOR FATE?

WHEN FEELINGS BURN BRIGHT AND HARD...
I'VE BETRAYED NO ONE!!
...PEOPLE STAND AND FIGHT!!
AM I... GOING TO DIE!?
HERE COMES THE BEGINNING OF THE GREATEST BATTLE ON EARTH!!
SUMOMOMOMOMO
~THE STRONGEST BRIDE ON EARTH~
4

STAFF:
MAKIKO HORI
SHUUGO MURAKAMI
FUMIE ITOU
TAEKO SHIMADA
SEIKO KIZU

AUTHOR:
SHINOBU OHTAKA

THE STRONGEST NEE-SAN ON EARTH

IROHA MIYAMOTO

THE ONLY DAUGHTER OF THE CHIEF OF THE MIYAMOTO CLAN, ONCE THE MOST FEARED ORGANIZED CRIME FAMILY IN ALL OF JAPAN. SHE RISKS HER LIFE TO BRING ABOUT THE REBIRTH OF HER CLAN!

INDARA GENMA-RYUU SECRET ART COMPENDIUM

CRESCENT SLICE

A SINGLE-BLADED LONG-DISTANCE SLASHING ATTACK. A CRESCENT-SHAPED SHOCK WAVE IS CREATED WITH A PERFECTLY STRAIGHT SWIPE FROM THE KATANA. WHILE IT IS SIMPLY COMPRESSED WIND PRESSURE, ITS STRENGTH CAN TEAR UP THE GROUND AND CRUSH ENEMIES.

DOUBLE-KILL MADARA SLICE

A DOUBLE-BLADED CLOSE-RANGE SLASHING ATTACK. THIS QUICK SIMULTANEOUS SLASH FROM TWO SWORDS WILL MOW DOWN ANY FOE WITHIN STRIKING DISTANCE. IF ATTEMPTED AT A DISTANCE, ITS SLOW SPEED RESULTS IN AN INTERVAL OF SEVERAL SECONDS BETWEEN THE RELEASE OF THE ATTACK AND ITS DEVASTATING ARRIVAL ON THE TARGET'S FLESH.

INDARA GENMA-RYUU ELIXER COMPENDIUM

MUSCLE ENHANCER

A QUAFFABLE NOSTRUM THAT DRAMATICALLY INCREASES STRENGTH, CORRODES MENTAL CONTROL AND LEADS TO INSANITY. ITS EFFECTS WILL WEAR OFF AFTER THE IMBIBER RECEIVES A STRONG PHYSICAL OR MENTAL SHOCK. THESE NEGATIVE CIRCUMSTANCES CAN BE MITIGATED THROUGH CAREFUL MONITORING OF ITS POTENCY.

INDARA GENMA-RYUU MARTIAL ARTS

SNAKE SHADOW TOOLS OF DARKNESS

SECRET, TRADITIONAL CLAN WEAPONS USED IN VARIOUS METHODS OF ASSASSINATION. THE MEMBERS OF THE MIYAMOTO CLAN HAVE MASTERED THE USE OF THESE WEAPONS TO STRIKE DOWN THEIR FOES! THEY COME IN VARIOUS SHAPES AND SIZES, WITH USES RANGING FROM SLASHING TARGETS TO CONFUSING ENEMIES. THE TRUE LIMIT OF THEIR STRENGTH IS MUTABLE AND UNKNOWN.

SUMOMOMO MOMOMO③

Shinobu Ohtaka

Translation: Stephen Paul

Lettering: Terri Delgado

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